

GAO

Report to the Chairman, Committee on
Armed Services, U.S. Senate

September 1990

SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

Progress in Implementing Legislative Mandates





United States
General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

**National Security and
International Affairs Division**

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The Honorable Sam Nunn
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This report addresses the Department of Defense's implementation of congressionally mandated reforms involving the recently activated U.S. Special Operations Command. As requested, we focused on the status of implementation of the various legislative provisions affecting the revitalization of the U.S. special operations forces and the adequacy and appropriateness of the Defense budget to meet the Command's requirements until the Command assumes its own programming and budgeting responsibilities.

We are recommending that the Secretary of Defense establish specific milestone dates for completing and administering the essential agreements between the Command and the services and other Defense organizations and take appropriate steps to help ensure that such milestones are met.

We are sending copies of this report to the Secretary of Defense and to the Chairmen, House Committees on Armed Services and Appropriations and Senate Committee on Appropriations. We will make copies available to others upon request.

Please contact me on (202) 275-4265 if you or your staff have any questions concerning this report. Other major contributors are listed in appendix V.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy R. Kingsbury". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nancy R. Kingsbury
Director
Air Force Issues

Executive Summary

Purpose

The Department of Defense's inability to effectively prepare for and conduct special operations missions has been a matter of concern to the Senate Committee on Armed Services for some time. Because of these concerns, the Congress passed reforming legislation in 1986, 1987, and 1988 to reorganize U.S. special operations policies, programs, and capabilities and to correct perceived deficiencies in the ability of the United States to conduct special operations missions and engage in low-intensity conflicts.

The Chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services, requested GAO to review the implementation of the mandated reforms and specifically assess the following.

- Progress the U.S. Special Operations Command has made in integrating special operations forces into the new unified command.
- The adequacy and appropriateness of the funding requested for special operations forces for fiscal years 1990 and 1991.
- Progress the Command has made in assuming its budget preparation and execution responsibilities, which are to be exercised not later than the fiscal year 1992 budget cycle.

Background

One of the key legislatively mandated reforms was the establishment of the U.S. Special Operations Command. The legislation identified the forces to be assigned and defined the Command's activities and functions. The Congress mandated further reforms in 1987 and 1988 that strengthened the role and authority of the Commander in Chief of the Command and increased the Commander's responsibilities for providing the necessary resources to carry out the mandates.

Results in Brief

The Command is making progress in integrating special operations forces. Most special operations forces identified by the legislation for assignment were so assigned by March 1988. The Command is reaching agreements with the Army, Navy, and Air Force and other Defense organizations to delineate responsibilities and relationships. However, some of the agreements considered essential by the Command have not been completed, and milestone dates have not been set for completing them.

The adequacy and appropriateness of funding requested for special operations forces for fiscal years 1990 and 1991 are uncertain. The requests do not represent the joint worldwide special operations'

requirements because they have not yet been validated by the Command.

The Command is taking steps to assume its congressionally mandated programming and budgeting responsibilities beginning with the fiscal year 1992 budget. Timely completion of this process requires the cooperation of Defense and its organizations.

Principal Findings

Integration of Forces

The legislation permits the Secretary of Defense to (1) designate and assign forces not identified by the legislation and (2) exclude forces that were identified. The Secretary has exercised this authority several times since the Command was established. For example, those units designated in the legislation but not assigned include (1) all Marine Corps units, (2) certain kinds of specially trained Air Force aircrews and their aircraft, and (3) two Naval Reserve helicopter units.

Progress in Implementing Legislative Mandates

As of March 1990, 10 of the 29 agreements considered essential by the Command for implementing the legislation were still unsigned, and typically no milestone dates had been established to complete the agreements. The Command is implementing its joint baseline master plan and an action plan for integrating special operations forces. But, many of the milestone dates are not scheduled to be reached for several years because of the complexity of the new interorganization roles and responsibilities in areas such as intelligence gathering, analysis, and dissemination. Completion of some tasks, such as threat assessments for certain geographical areas of the world, will continue to be modified due to constantly changing circumstances.

Adequacy and Appropriateness of Fiscal Year 1990 and 1991 Budgets Are Uncertain

The funding targeted for special operations forces for fiscal years 1990 and 1991, which totals about \$5.5 billion, represents aggregations of each service's unique requirements rather than the joint perspective of the Command. The Command is analyzing special operations missions to validate its worldwide requirements but is not expected to complete its analysis and obtain concurrence from all of the other affected commands until June 1991. The validation results should provide the Command a better and more impartial basis for choosing future weapons and

equipment rather than accepting candidates that reflect service advocacy and parochialism.

Command Is Preparing to Assume Its Programming and Budgeting Responsibilities

The Command and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict are jointly responsible for managing Major Force Program 11 (Special Operations) as a new segment of the Defense budget. The Deputy Secretary of Defense directed that the Command begin budget presentation and execution in fiscal year 1991 to prepare for fully assuming its mandated responsibilities beginning in fiscal year 1992. The Command's ability to complete the process in time depends on the cooperation of the other involved Defense organizations. Although the Deputy Secretary required that all agreements needed to carry out this function be completed by December 15, 1989, as of March 1990, this requirement had not been met.

Recommendations

GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense (1) establish specific milestone dates for completing and executing the 10 essential agreements between the Command and the services and other Defense organizations and (2) take appropriate steps to help ensure that such milestones are met.

Agency Comments

The Department of Defense generally agreed with GAO's findings and recommendations. It provided updated information on the status of the remaining 10 agreements to the effect that all but 1 should be completed by September 30, 1990, although admittedly this milestone date was neither mandated nor approved by higher authorities. This one agreement, between the Command and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, is dependent upon approval of the Assistant Secretary's charter. Moreover, the agreements between the Command and its Air Force component command will have to be reevaluated and updated because of organizational and other changes made internally by the Air Force to the component command in May 1990.

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Abbreviations

DOD Department of Defense
GAO General Accounting Office

Introduction

The U.S. Special Operations Command was established as a unified combatant command for special operations forces in November 1986 by Public Law 99-661. It became operational in April 1987 and is headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida.

The Command is responsible for preparing its forces to conduct special operations, psychological operations, and civil affairs operations in support of national security interests across the spectrum of conflict, from low to high intensity. The Department of Defense (DOD) defines special operations as actions conducted by specially organized, trained, and equipped military and paramilitary forces to achieve military, political, economic, or psychological objectives by nonconventional military means in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive areas. They are conducted in peace, conflict, and war, independently or in coordination with operations of conventional forces. Politico-military considerations frequently shape special operations, requiring clandestine, covert, or low-visibility techniques and oversight at the national level. Special operations differ from conventional operations in degree of risk, operational techniques, mode of employment, independence from friendly support, and dependence on detailed operational intelligence and indigenous assets. Psychological operations are intended to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign government, organizations, groups, and individuals. The purpose of psychological operations is to induce or reinforce foreign attitudes and behavior favorable to the originator's objectives. Civil affairs operations include those phases of the activities of a commander that embrace the relationship between the military forces and civil authorities and people in a friendly country or area or occupied country or area when military forces are present.

Unlike the five unified combatant theater commands (Atlantic, Pacific, Southern, Central, and European), the Command has no specific geographic area of responsibility. It can employ its forces, as directed by the President or the Secretary of Defense, anywhere in the world. The Command also supports the special operations requirements of other unified commands¹ and is responsible for developing special operations forces' strategies, doctrine, tactics, and equipment requirements.

¹ A command with a broad and continuing mission under a single commander and composed of significant assigned components of two or more services, and which is established and so designated by the President, through the Secretary of Defense with the advice and assistance of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff commander of an existing unified command established by the President.

Chapter 1
Introduction

The active and reserve special operations component forces of the Army, Navy, and Air Force located in the United States and assigned to the Command are shown in figure 1.1. The assigned units operate through service component organizations that are under the operational control of the Command.

Each of the component commands, schools, and centers is described in appendix I.

As shown in table 1.1, the Command was authorized by the Department of Defense (DOD) about 35,000 military and civilian personnel in fiscal year 1989. Because the information is classified, this figure excludes forces associated with the Joint Special Operations Command.

Table 1.1: Command Force Structure for Fiscal Year 1989

Component	Active forces	Guard and Reserve Forces	Civilians	Total
Command Headquarters	445	149	128	722
Army units and schools	10,731	13,362	269	24,362
Air Force units and schools	4,506	703	208	5,417
Navy units and schools	3,173	1,123	114	4,410
Total	18,855	15,337	719	34,911

Background

The Congress focused attention on the need to reorganize U.S. special operations capabilities following problems with several special missions carried out in the early 1980s. The Holloway Commission report on the failed attempt to rescue U.S. hostages from Iran in April 1980 identified inadequacies in organization, planning, training, and command and control. The Commission recommended the creation of a permanent joint special operations capability to overcome the shortfalls of an ad hoc crisis response.

Additional incidents in the years after the aborted Iran hostage rescue mission, which focused congressional attention on whether integration of special operations forces was sufficient, included the U.S. reactions to the 1983 events in Grenada, the 1985 terrorist hijacking of a Trans World Airline flight, and the 1985 Achille Lauro incident.

In 1985, a Senate Committee on Armed Services staff report found that the United States lacked joint military institutions capable of effectively integrating the forces of the different services in combined (i.e., joint) operations. Organizational shortfalls that were cited related to (1) service parochialism in operational matters and (2) poorly developed joint doctrine. The report emphasized that a basic "lesson learned" from the aborted Iran hostage rescue mission was that interservice interests dictated the character of the force that was used and did not enhance cohesion and integration. The report further identified the need for "... a

strong . . . multifunctional, organizational focus for low intensity warfare and special operations.”

Reforms Mandated in 1986

Citing serious deficiencies in the capabilities of the United States to conduct special operations and engage in low-intensity conflicts,² the Congress enacted Public Law 99-661 on November 14, 1986, to revitalize special operations. The need for specific legislation was discussed in the October 1986 conference report accompanying the fiscal year 1987 DOD authorization bill and it stated:

“ . . . legislation is necessary to overcome the unending resistance in the Department of Defense to necessary organizational and other reforms of special operations forces.

“ . . . the seriousness of the problems and the inability or unwillingness of the Department of Defense to solve them left no alternative . . . the failure to act forcefully in this area and at this time would be inconsistent with the responsibilities of the Congress to the American people.”

The law directed the President, through the Secretary of Defense, to establish an Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict and a unified combatant command for special operations forces. The law also defined special operations activities; listed the new Command’s functions, to include responsibility of the Commander in Chief for ensuring the combat readiness of assigned forces and monitoring the preparedness of special operations forces units assigned to the other unified combatant commands; created a major force program³ category for special operations forces in the Five-Year Defense Plan;⁴ and required the Command to budget for the development and acquisition of special operations-peculiar⁵ equipment.

²Political and military confrontation between contending states or groups below conventional war and above the routine, peaceful competition among states. It frequently involves protracted struggles of competing principles and ideologies. Low-intensity conflicts range from subversion to the use of armed forces. It is waged by a combination of means employing political, economic, informational, and military instruments. Low-intensity conflicts are often localized and generally in the Third World but present larger regional and global security implications.

³An aggregation of program elements in the Six-Year Defense Plan that reflects a force mission or support function of DOD and contains the resources allocated to achieve an objective or plan. It reflects fiscal year time-phasing of mission objectives to be accomplished and the means proposed for their accomplishment.

⁴As of July 1988, this is referred to as a six-year plan.

⁵Equipment, materials, supplies, and services required for special operations mission support for which there is no broad conventional requirement.

By reference to certain Joint Chiefs of Staff documents, the law also identified special operations forces and directed the Secretary of Defense to assign those forces stationed in the United States to the Command. The law further directed the Secretary of Defense to submit a report describing the Command's immediate strategic special operations airlift requirements and associated funding to the Congress by June 1987.

Additional Reforms Mandated in 1987 and 1988

Citing institutional resistance to the implementation of the legislation passed in 1986, the Congress mandated additional reforms in 1987 and 1988. In December 1987, the Congress enacted Public Law 100-180, which directed the Secretary of the Army to act as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict until the office was filled by presidential appointment. The law also directed the Secretary of Defense to provide sufficient resources for the Command to carry out its duties and responsibilities and mandated that the Command's headquarters have no fewer than 450 staff by September 30, 1988. In addition, the law provided the Commander of the Command with limited head of agency authority,⁶ established the Command's Office of Inspector General, and directed the Secretary of Defense to establish the new major force program category for special operations within 30 days of the enactment of the act.

The conference report accompanying the law expressed concern that DOD was delaying or blocking implementation of special operations forces reforms. It stated that insufficient progress had been made in reorganizing special operations forces, and as a result, additional legislative action was necessary to remove bureaucratic obstacles to progress.

The Congress mandated additional responsibilities and authority for the Commander in Chief of the Command by enacting Public Law 100-456 in September 1988. These included (1) preparing and submitting to the Secretary of Defense program recommendations and budget proposals for special operations forces and for other forces assigned to the Command and (2) exercising 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 the other unified combatant commands.

⁶Procurement authority provided by chapter 137 of title 10 of the United States Code. The Commander in Chief of the U.S. Special Operations Command has head of agency authority with respect to his responsibilities for developing and acquiring special operations-peculiar equipment and acquiring special operations-peculiar materiel, supplies, and services.

Congressional debate on this law indicates an understanding that the Command was to have sole responsibility for preparing and submitting the program objectives memorandum⁷ for all special operations forces. Moreover, the Command was to assume programming, budgeting, and execution responsibilities as soon as possible but no later than the resource allocation cycle for fiscal year 1992. DOD's resistance to implementing the prior legislation was again cited as a basis for this additional legislation.

Appendix II describes the missions, functions, and activities authorized and specified to the Command by the legislation.

Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

The Chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services, asked us to review DOD's implementation of mandated reforms involving the Command. Specifically, we were asked to assess (1) the progress made by the Command in integrating the special operations forces of the services, (2) the adequacy and appropriateness of funding requested for special operations forces in the President's defense authorization request for fiscal years 1990 and 1991, and (3) the progress made in preparing the Command to carry out its responsibilities for budget preparation and execution.

To ascertain the Command's progress in integrating special operations forces, we reviewed legislation on the establishment of the Command, our prior work⁸ on unified and specified commands, congressional hearings, and committee reports. We compared forces identified by law to be assigned to the Command with forces actually assigned to the Command. We also verified decisions by the Secretary of Defense to include or exclude forces from the Command. We analyzed the information in the Command's July 1988 joint special operations forces baseline master plan and the 1989 Command organizational action plan that identifies the plan's milestone dates, along with associated Command documents.

We evaluated the status of the Command's various agreements with the services and other DOD organizations needed to carry out legislatively mandated requirements and the progress in meeting those requirements.

⁷An annual memorandum in prescribed format submitted by the DOD component head to the Secretary of Defense that recommends the total resource requirements and programs of the component, commensurate with the parameters of the Secretary's fiscal guidance.

⁸Defense Reorganization: Progress and Concerns at JCS and Combatant Commands (GAO/NSIAD-89-83, Mar. 1, 1989). Defense Manpower: Reductions in Joint Activities and Service Reallocations (GAO/NSIAD-89-148FS, May 17, 1989).

We interviewed Command and component command officials, as well as nine members of the Special Operations Policy Advisory Group, to obtain their views on the progress being made to implement the requirements.

To ascertain the adequacy and appropriateness of funding, we interviewed Command officials and officials in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict. We reviewed the President's biennial defense budget requests for fiscal years 1988/89 and 1990/91 and compared them to the Command's supporting budgetary documentation. In addition, we reviewed the Secretary of Defense's annual reports to the Congress on its biennial budgets and other relevant documentation to determine compliance with legislative mandates. Furthermore, we reviewed documents, such as the Command's Operational Concept statement, to determine the status of the Command's joint mission analysis plan for validating special operations requirements.

To ascertain the progress made in carrying out its programming, budgeting, and budget execution responsibilities, we interviewed Command and component command officials and reviewed the Acting Secretary of Defense and Deputy Secretary of Defense memorandums granting the Command program and budget responsibility. We reviewed the February 1988 DOD Deputy Inspector General's report on unified and specified command headquarters to determine the report's effect on the Command's need for personnel to carry out the legislative mandate. We also reviewed the status of the Command's joint manpower programs and manpower requests associated with its programming and budgeting responsibilities and evaluated documents pertaining to Major Force Program 11, program objective memorandum development, and command acquisition authority.

Appendix III lists the organizations visited during our review. We did our work between October 1988 and March 1990 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

Progress Is Being Made in Integrating Special Operations Forces

The Command is making progress in integrating special operations forces. The Secretary of Defense has assigned most special operations forces identified by the legislation to the Command. In addition, the Secretary has included some forces not referenced by the legislation but has excluded other forces referenced by the legislation. These inclusions and exclusions are consistent with the authority granted the Secretary by the legislation. The Secretary has assigned most active and reserve component special operations forces stationed in the United States referred to by the legislation to the Command.

The Command has made progress in implementing plans that it prepared for carrying out its other legislative mandates. However, the Command has not obtained all necessary signed agreements with DOD and other organizations delineating their respective roles, responsibilities, and relationships.

Legislative Assignments

According to the legislation creating the Special Operations Command, special operations forces stationed in the United States were to be assigned to the Command. Special operations forces based outside the United States were to be assigned to the appropriate unified combatant theater commanders.

The legislation refers to specific Joint Chiefs of Staff documents that the Congress believed identified "special operations forces" and therefore should be assigned to the Command. One of the documents is Annex E to the December 17, 1985, Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan, which identifies military forces under the special operations category that are available for assignment to the unified and specified commands.

The legislation states that "core" or "augmenting" forces identified in Annex E should be assigned to the Command. The document does not specifically define those terms nor does the Joint Chiefs of Staff in its document of official definition of terms. The document, however, does generally categorize the listed forces by referring to them as

- having a "primary" special operations mission,
- being "units trained and equipped to conduct or support special operations as a collateral mission,"
- having "an inherent capability to support" special operations, or
- possessing "a capability to conduct or support" special operations.

The Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, assigns forces to unified and specified commands by periodically issuing a document entitled "Forces for Unified and Specified Commands." This document has been updated three times since the Command was established in April 1987—in September 1987, in August 1988, and in January 1990.

Our comparison of forces listed in Annex E to forces assigned to the Command showed that all those forces categorized as having a primary special operations mission had been assigned by March 1988. Concerning its component commands, the Command assumed operational command of the Army's Special Operations Command, the 23rd Air Force, and the Naval Special Warfare Command in April 1987. The Joint Special Operations Command was added in August 1987. The assignment of the component commands also included a variety of operating units belonging to those commands.

Additions and Exclusions by the Secretary of Defense

The Secretary of Defense exercised his discretionary authority permitted by the legislation to assign certain units to the Command and to exclude other units referenced by the legislation. At the outset, the assignment of forces did not include Army and Air Force civil affairs and psychological operations units or any operating units under the Navy's Special Warfare Command. But the Secretary assigned the civil affairs and psychological operations units in October 1987, the Naval Special Warfare Groups 1 and 2 in January 1988, and the Warfare Groups' Sea-Air-Land units in March 1988.

The remaining forces listed in the documents referenced by the legislation and categorized as having other than a primary special operations mission were not assigned to the Command. They included (1) all Marine Corps forces, (2) certain kinds of specially trained Air Force aircrews and their aircraft, and (3) two Naval Reserve helicopter units.

No Marine Corps forces have yet been assigned to the Command. While the Corps does not have any designated special operations forces, it does have special operations capable units that are intended to carry out maritime special operations. We were told that these Corps forces carry the special operations designation only while deployed outside the continental United States. The outgoing Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommended in September 1989 that the DOD regulation governing the assignment of functions to the services be amended to state that special operations is a collateral function of the Corps. Also, the Corps has civil

affairs units in its reserve component that appear to have the capabilities to perform the same or similar functions as Army civil affairs units currently assigned to the Command.

Some specially trained Air Force aircrews and their aircraft are dual tasked to both the Command and to the Air Force's Military Airlift Command. For the time being, the units are assigned to the U.S. Transportation Command, the parent unified command of the Military Airlift Command. The dual tasking of these aircrews and their aircraft was handled by executing a Command Arrangements Agreement in December 1988 between the Special Operations Command and the U.S. Transportation Command. When certain modifications to the aircraft, scheduled to be done from 1992 to 1993, are completed, assignment of these particular forces is to be reevaluated.

The Air Force clarified the command relationships within the Air Force component (23rd Air Force) of the U.S. Special Operations Command in May 1990 by replacing the 23rd Air Force with the Air Force Special Operations Command. Because regular and special operations forces had been assigned to the 23rd Air Force, it reported to both the Special Operations Command and the Military Airlift Command. Neither the Army nor the Navy had this situation. The Commander in Chief of the U.S. Special Operations Command recommended in March 1990 to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force that the 23rd Air Force be upgraded to the status of an Air Force major command and that all nonspecial operations units be removed from its operational control. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict concurred in this recommendation. In our opinion, adoption of the recommendation should help clear up any potential command relationship problems within the Air Force component of the Command.

Concerning Navy forces, the two Naval Reserve helicopter units listed in Annex E were assigned to the Atlantic and Pacific unified combatant commands, not to the Command. The mission of the units was changed by the Navy in fiscal year 1989 to essentially search and rescue,¹ and the units were redesignated as helicopter composite squadrons.

¹The use of aircraft, surface craft, submarines, specialized rescue teams, and equipment to search for and rescue personnel in distress on land or at sea.

Command Progress in Implementing Other Legislative Mandates

As of March 1990, about 65 percent of the 29 agreements the Command considers essential to fully implementing the legislative mandates had been completed. The Command's position is that the substantive issues associated with the remaining incomplete agreements have been finalized and agreed to by the affected parties.

With the exception of the agreements applicable to development and implementation of the budget (see ch. 4), milestone dates for completing the others have not been established. Also, the Command is continuing to implement a joint baseline master plan and an action plan for integrating special operations forces into the Command, but many of the milestone dates governing such functions as communications, readiness, training and operations, force structure, and personnel are not scheduled to be reached for several years because of their complexity.

Why Agreements Are Needed

The missions, functions, and responsibilities the Congress assigned to the Command require continued analysis and assessment of the Command's relationships with the services, DOD and non-DOD agencies and organizations, and the other unified and specified commands. The Command has many responsibilities that are unique for a unified command, including preparing forces; ensuring the readiness and interoperability of those forces; monitoring promotions of assigned military members; validating requirements for equipment and weapons; and, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, preparing, executing, and managing a new major force program. Many of these responsibilities were previously the province of the services and other DOD organizations. Accordingly, to fully and successfully implement the changes required by the legislative mandates, the Command needs to have formal, signed agreements that will delineate each party's role and responsibilities as well as the relationships with each other.

In March 1988, the Command's Deputy Commander in Chief told the Senate Committee on Armed Services that the Command could not unilaterally respond to the legislative mandates. The Deputy Commander stated:

The law must be interpreted by the various levels of authority and translated into directives, transfers of responsibility, memoranda of agreement, and so on... Although the process seems ponderous, ... much still remains to be done"

Many of the functions the Congress assigned to the Command traditionally had been the sole responsibility of each service. For example, each service trained its special operations forces and developed strategy, doctrine, and tactics for using the forces. The Command has been given the authority to prescribe the training standards and regimen for both special operations units and individuals, regardless of service affiliation, as well as to develop strategy, doctrine, and tactics, joint or otherwise, in the use of those forces. The Command needs to complete agreements with the services to assign training and other tasks and to ensure that any changes made in these functions are implemented uniformly among the affected units and organizations.

As another example, before the Command was created, each of the services prepared its own plans for using its special operations forces to respond to possible contingencies in the various theaters of operations. However, each service plan focused on its own forces and capabilities to support those forces. Each plan gave limited attention to the contribution of other services or to interoperability requirements, such as whether communications equipment was compatible. With the creation of the Command, however, the plans for deploying and using special operations forces in the various theaters of operation should represent the needs of joint special operations forces, not just an individual service. Agreements are needed to reflect this new, joint perspective.

Other examples include the delineation of responsibilities in such areas as (1) developing intelligence architectures and sub-architectures, (2) establishing counter-narcotics activities, (3) developing special technologies for special operations forces, (4) implementing low-intensity conflict policy, and (5) deploying and using special operations forces.

The Command's Progress in Obtaining Signed Agreements With Other Organizations

The Command is making progress in developing the agreements it needs with the services and other DOD organizations. However, as of March 1990, 10 of the 29 agreements it considers to be essential to carrying out its legislative mandates were still incomplete. The completion of these agreements is important because they will define and clarify the new Command's role and responsibilities. The Command's position regarding the incomplete agreements is that the substantive issues have been finalized and agreed to by the affected parties and that, due to the complexity of the agreements, accuracy has been placed ahead of speed in their completion.

Chapter 2
Progress Is Being Made in Integrating Special
Operations Forces

Among the completed agreements are (1) an agreement with the U.S. Transportation Command defining command and control and support relationships between these two Commands, (2) "umbrella" agreements with the Army and the Air Force that set the framework for developing more specific agreements, and (3) agreements with the other unified combatant commands covering command, control, and mutual support responsibilities.

A Command official told us there were a total of 135 agreements, of which 29 are considered essential in fully carrying out the legislative mandates. These agreements are categorized as Memoranda of Agreement, Memoranda of Understanding, and Command Arrangement Agreements. The nonessential agreements generally deal with house-keeping, host/tenant relations, and administrative matters.

Table 2.1 shows that 10 of the 29 essential agreements were not finalized as of March 1990, according to Command officials.

**Chapter 2
Progress Is Being Made in Integrating Special
Operations Forces**

Table 2.1: March 1990 Status of 29 Agreements

Organization	Complete	Incomplete
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict		X
Army:		
"Umbrella" agreement	X	
Deployment/redeployment	X	
Training, doctrine, and professional development		X
Research, development, and acquisition	X	
Intelligence activities		X
Major Force Program 11 responsibilities		X
Combating terrorism		X
Transfer of classified programs		X
Navy:		
"Umbrella" agreement		X
Training	X	
Major Force Program 11 responsibilities	X	
Research, development, and acquisition		X
Air Force:		
"Umbrella" agreement	X	
Major Force Program 11 responsibilities	X	
Research, development, and acquisition	X	
Training, doctrine, and professional development		X
Intelligence activities		X
Unified Combatant Commands:		
U.S. European Command	X	
U.S. Pacific Command	X	
U.S. Southern Command	X	
U.S. Atlantic Command	X	
U.S. Central Command	X	
U.S. Transportation Command	X	
Specified Combatant Commands Forces Command	X	
Other DOD Organizations:		
Defense Intelligence Agency	X	
U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command	X	
Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency	X	
Naval Electronics System Activities	X	

In evaluating the reasons for some of the agreements being incomplete, several Command officials said that typically there were no milestone dates as to when the agreements were to be completed. For example, a memorandum from the Acting Secretary of Defense in January 1989,

assigning programming and budgeting responsibility to the Command, stressed the importance and necessity of developing executive agreements with the services and other DOD organizations. However, it did not prescribe milestone dates for completing the agreements. Not until December 1989 was there an attempt to establish milestone dates for some of the budget related agreements (see ch. 4).

The Command's Implementation of Its Master Plan

To fulfill its responsibilities mandated by the Congress, the Command prepared implementation plans, including (1) a joint special operations forces baseline master plan that addresses the Command's missions, activities, and functions and contains short-term, mid-term, and long-term milestone dates covering the next 20 years that have been imposed by the Commander in Chief to carry out the Command's objectives and (2) an action plan that tracks the incomplete tasks needed to carry out those objectives. The Command's position is that these plans are needed to ensure joint, interoperable, and fiscally attainable special operations forces programs and to fulfill the intent of the mandates.

Implementation of the plans has begun and is a continuous process. The action plan is updated quarterly, and as tasks are completed, they are routinely deleted from the plan and others are added as circumstances change. The baseline master plan, dated July 1988, is divided into 18 separate major functional areas such as command relationships, joint doctrine, joint mission analysis, force structure, Major Force Program 11, logistics, and readiness, training, and operations.

The master plan contains milestone dates that are categorized by the Command as being in the short term (current year plus the following year), mid term (2 to 8 years), and long term (9 to 19 years). Because of the manner in which the Command implements its master plan, we were unable to quantify the Command's progress in this area. Some portions, such as the development of the operational concept document for special operations, have been completed; other portions, such as the threat to worldwide special operations forces analysis, are continually updated and, in a sense, may never be completed. The Command's position is that although the action plan always shows a number of incomplete tasks, this condition simply reflects the complexity of the issues the Command needs to resolve.

Conclusions

The Command is making progress integrating special operations forces. Most U.S.-stationed special operations forces have been assigned to the

Command. Consistent with the authority granted by the legislation, and in consultation with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense has routinely included and excluded units for assignment to the Command through the "Forces for" document mechanism. In addition, the Command has developed a master plan with short-, mid-, and long-range goals and has begun signing agreements with the services and other DOD organizations.

The Command's ability to complete the integration process will be constrained until it obtains all the major agreements. That process could be made more timely if the Secretary of Defense or his designee were to set realistic milestone dates for obtaining these agreements.

Recommendation

We recommend that the Secretary of Defense set specific milestone dates for completing and executing all of the essential agreements between the Command and the services and other DOD organizations and take appropriate steps to help ensure that such dates are met.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

DOD concurred with the recommendation but added that of the 10 agreements cited as being incomplete as of March 1990, 8 had been completed or are scheduled to be completed by September 30, 1990, and 1 had been determined to be no longer required. (The one remaining incomplete agreement is between the Assistant Secretary and the Command and is dependent upon an approved charter for the Assistant Secretary.) The September milestone was not mandated or approved by higher authorities but only reflected informal agreements between the parties; therefore, we have not dropped our recommendation. DOD told us that because of the new status of the Air Force Special Operations Command, an additional year will be allowed to update the agreements between this new organization and the Command.

DOD did not agree with what it characterized as our legislative interpretation that all Marine Corps forces should be assigned to the Command. Although Corps forces were listed in Annex E of the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan, the Secretary of Defense used legislative authority to exclude these forces from the Command. We have not questioned that decision.

Adequacy and Appropriateness of Funding Requested for Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991 Are Uncertain

The adequacy and appropriateness of funding requested for special operations forces for fiscal years 1990 and 1991 are uncertain. The requested funding represents the viewpoints of each of the services, along with the unique requirements stated in their separate special operations forces master plans, not the joint perspective of the Command. The Command is analyzing missions to validate worldwide special operations forces' requirements but does not expect to complete this analysis until June 1991. The validation results should provide the Command a better and more impartial basis for choosing its future weapons and equipment rather than accepting candidates that reflect service advocacy and parochialism. The fiscal years 1990 and 1991 funding requests were presented in January 1989 and January 1990, respectively.

The Requested Funding Does Not Represent the Command's Joint Perspective

The Congress mandated the aggregation of all the separate special operations programs and requirements of the services and DOD organizations into one program. By creating a separate major force program category for special operations forces (Major Force Program 11) in the Six Year Defense Plan, the Congress wanted to highlight the resources needed to ensure adequate consideration for funding special operations forces and to provide increased congressional and DOD visibility over the forces' revitalization.

As in previous years, funding for special operations programs and special operations-related needs for fiscal year 1990 is dispersed throughout many of the other 10 major force programs (e.g., training, intelligence, research and development, etc.) and is managed by the services and other DOD organizations. With the exception of the Military Personnel appropriation accounts, fiscal year 1991 funds budgeted for dedicated special operations forces' financing were included in the new Major Force Program 11 category. In December 1989, the Deputy Secretary of Defense directed that these funds be transferred from the various appropriation accounts managed by the services and other DOD organizations to accounts to be managed by the Command for full program and budget execution.

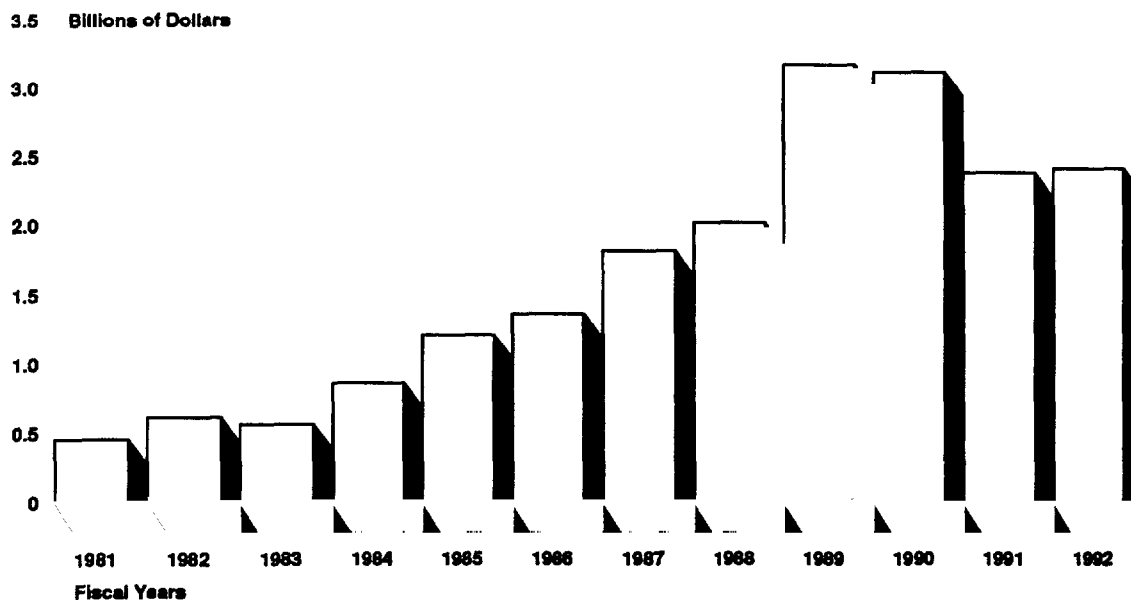
The Command's Budget

In his annual report to the Congress for fiscal year 1990, the Secretary of Defense stated that DOD has invested about \$11.8 billion in special operations forces' revitalization since 1981 and that an additional \$8.4 billion is programmed for fiscal years 1990 through 1992. The requested funding for fiscal years 1990 and 1991 was about \$3.1 billion and \$2.3

Chapter 3
Adequacy and Appropriateness of Funding
Requested for Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991
Are Uncertain

billion, respectively. Figure 3.1 shows this funding for fiscal years 1981 through 1992.

Figure 3.1: Funding From Fiscal Years 1981 Through 1992



Note: Fiscal years 1981-90 are actual funding; fiscal years 1991 and 1992 represent the level of funding requested.

To prepare its fiscal years 1990 and 1991 budget submissions for special operations forces programs, the Command relied upon program budget and supporting data the services and other DOD organizations provided. The Command had difficulty aggregating the services' budgetary information because each service programmed special operations forces' requirements differently. For example, the Air Force and the Navy displayed the funding for conventional ammunition differently from the Army. In addition, the supporting data were generally based upon requirements and priorities stated by each of the services' master plans and other factors. Thus, the requirements did not necessarily represent the Command's viewpoint or priorities.

Service requirements were validated through service unique procedures, whereas the Command's needs should be driven by joint requirements of the unified combatant commands, according to the Command's master

plan. The validation results should enable the Command to choose its future weapons and equipment on a better and more impartial basis rather than to accept candidates that reflect service advocacy and parochialism. The Command has implemented the "crosswalk"¹ approach to consolidate its programs into one force account as an expeditious, short-term response to meet fiscal year 1990 and 1991 budget presentation needs and fulfill the congressional mandate; however, the Command recognizes the need to identify, validate, and prioritize those requirements that meet joint special operations forces' needs.

The Command Is Validating Special Operations Forces' Requirements

The Command is analyzing special operations missions in coordination with the services, the other unified commands, and other U.S. government agencies to identify joint theater and national mission area requirements for special operations. The joint mission analysis is expected to result in a complete and detailed definition and validation from the Command's point of view of special operations forces mission and resource requirements in all theaters in low-, mid-, and high-intensity conflict environments. This information is to be integrated into the planning, programming, and budgeting system and the development of Major Force Program 11.

Because the joint requirements affect each theater and are essential to providing proper special operations support to the other unified commanders, the Command must obtain concurrence on the joint needs from each of the five unified combatant theater commands. It began preparing the joint mission analysis in November 1987 with the drafting of the Command's Operational Concepts statement. As of March 1990, the Command had defined and reached agreement on the special operations mission and requirements for the U.S. Southern Command, and it was developing a separate analysis on counter-narcotics. An analysis of the Pacific Command's requirements, which began in March 1989, has been completed. (A separate analysis covering Korea also has been completed.) The European Command analysis began in December 1989, and the analyses applicable to the Atlantic and Central Commands were scheduled to begin in 1990. A member of the Command's Joint Studies Analysis Group said the group expects to complete all of the analyses and reach an agreement with all the unified combatant theater commands by June 1991.

¹The process by which budgetary information applicable to special operating forces and programs appearing in the services' respective budgets are reformatted as Major Force Program 11 items and displayed in the Congressional Justification Book.

**Chapter 3
Adequacy and Appropriateness of Funding
Requested for Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991
Are Uncertain**

Conclusions

The basis for assessing the adequacy of the funding DOD has requested for its special operations forces for fiscal years 1990 and 1991 is the validity of the requirements contained in the services' special operations master plans. However, because the Command has not completed its analyses of these requirements, a decision whether the funding requested is adequate cannot be made.

Command Is Preparing to Assume Its Programming and Budgeting Responsibilities

The Command is taking steps to assume its programming and budgeting responsibilities that are scheduled to begin in fiscal year 1992. However, the Command's ability to complete the process on time depends upon the cooperation of DOD and DOD organizations. This cooperation includes (1) reaching agreements and getting clarification as to how the programming and budgeting preparation and execution functions and responsibilities are to be carried out and (2) deciding how to program and budget for unassigned special operations forces units. To ensure that the process was not delayed, the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued a policy and procedures memorandum on December 1, 1989, mandating that all of the necessary agreements be completed by December 15, 1989. As of March 1990, this had not been accomplished.

Legislative Mandates

The Congress directed DOD to take three specific actions to ensure that the Command would assume programming and budgeting responsibilities for special operations forces. First, as stated in the 1986 legislation, the Secretary of Defense was to create a major force program category for special operations forces in the Five Year Defense Plan (now the Six Year Defense Plan). In December 1987, the Congress set a 30-day deadline for the creation of this category and required the Secretary of Defense to certify that all program recommendations and budget proposals for special operations forces were included.

Second, as mandated by the 1987 legislation, the Secretary of Defense was to grant head of agency authority to the Command's Commander in Chief to permit the Command to develop and acquire special operations-peculiar equipment identified in the Major Force Program 11 budget. Third, the 1988 legislation mandated that the Command be responsible for preparing and submitting budget proposals for special operations forces to the Secretary of Defense. The Command is also responsible for executing the budget after approval. The Command was expected to assume budget and execution responsibilities as soon as possible but no later than the fiscal year 1992 budget cycle.

Extent of DOD's Compliance With the Mandates

DOD has complied with two mandates and has acted to comply with the third. In January 1988, the Secretary of Defense certified that DOD had established a Major Force Program 11 category in the Five-Year Defense Plan (the first mandate). In May 1988, DOD granted the Command's Commander in Chief head of agency authority (the second mandate). Actions

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Command Is Preparing to Assume Its
Programming and Budgeting Responsibilities

to delegate the Command the authority to assume budgetary responsibilities began in January 1989 with a memorandum from the Acting Secretary of Defense.

The January 1989 memorandum authorized the Command to assume (1) budget execution responsibilities for selected Major Force Program 11 programs (as determined by the Command's Commander in Chief), effective October 1, 1990, and (2) budget preparation and execution responsibilities for all of these programs, effective October 1, 1991. However, DOD has placed strict managerial controls over the execution of Major Force Program 11 funds. For example, these controls limit the Command's authority for reprogramming funds from or to these programs to only the Secretary of Defense or the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

The authority granted in January 1989 was amended by the Deputy Secretary of Defense on December 13, 1989, by issuing a Program Budget Decision Memorandum. This document accelerated the process by authorizing the Command to assume all budget and program responsibilities for Major Force Program 11 beginning with fiscal year 1991 (i.e., the fiscal period beginning October 1, 1990). The memorandum also directed the transfer of \$1.4 billion in Major Force Program 11 dedicated special operations forces' financing for fiscal year 1991 from the various appropriation accounts managed by the services and other DOD organizations to DOD agency accounts to be managed by the Command so that the Command could begin preparing, presenting, and defending Major Force Program 11 budget requests. As directed by the Deputy Secretary in a December 1, 1989, memorandum, the various Military Personnel appropriation accounts, representing about \$976 million of the fiscal year 1991 budget request, were not transferred but instead remained the fiscal responsibility of the military departments.

The January 1989 memorandum also directed the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the services, and other DOD organizations to cooperate with and provide the Command the resources, support, information, and assistance it needs to perform its Major Force Program 11 tasks but did not specify a timetable for doing so. As discussed in chapter 2, the absence of milestone dates for obtaining agreements and cooperation from other organizations in a timely fashion could hamper the Command's ability to meet the legislative mandates.

On December 1, 1989, the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued a policy and procedures memorandum to the DOD community that specified guidance and mandated a milestone date of December 15, 1989, for completing all of the necessary agreements as to how the programming, budgeting, and budget execution for special operations forces was to be carried out. Among other tasks, the Assistant Secretary for Special Operations and Low Intensity was directed to (1) provide overall supervision of the preparation and justification of special operations forces programs and budget, (2) adjudicate disagreements, as necessary, and (3) with assistance of the Command's Commander in Chief, present and defend the special operations forces program to the Congress. The agreements had not been completed as of March 1990.

Command Has Made Progress in Undertaking Its Responsibilities

The Command has taken steps to undertake its program, budgetary, and acquisition responsibilities in that it (1) has developed an organizational structure, (2) has developed and tested information systems to assist it in preparing and executing program budget estimates, and (3) was authorized most of the staffing requested to carry out these responsibilities.

As to its head of agency responsibilities, the Command plans to establish a special operations executive office for acquisition in the Washington, D.C., area in 1991 and to have an acquisition liaison at the Command headquarters in Florida. The executive office will be responsible for carrying out the research, development, and acquisition functions in accordance with the legislative mandate. The Command plans to continue to execute its major research, development, and acquisition functions through the services' acquisition systems, and it has reached an agreement with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency about developing special technologies for special operations forces.

Command Needs Cooperation From DOD and Its Agencies to Meet Its Fiscal Deadline

While the Command has made progress in some areas, it still needs the cooperation of DOD and DOD organizations to meet its mandated fiscal year 1992 deadline for fully assuming its programming and budgeting responsibilities. As discussed in chapter 2, the Command needs to obtain agreements with the services and other DOD organizations. In addition, the Command needs other cooperative actions from these parties to help it carry out its programming and budgeting preparation and execution functions.

The Command and the Assistant Secretary for Special Operations and Low Intensity still need to clarify their relationship to execute the legislative mandate properly. Even though the Command and the Assistant Secretary have joint budget preparation and execution responsibilities over Major Force Program 11 resources, they had not agreed, as of March 1990, as to who will do what in meeting these responsibilities. The responsibilities are to be defined in a memorandum of agreement that cannot be finalized until the Assistant Secretary's revised charter is approved. The Command's Policy Officer, Directorate of Plans, Policy, and Doctrine, told us in August 1989 that the revised charter was on hold pending confirmation of a new Assistant Secretary. Confirmation occurred in October 1989, but the charter had not been approved as of March 1990. A staff officer in the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff also told us in July 1989 that the Joint Chiefs will not update its regulation, Memorandum of Policy No. 136, which defines the respective roles of the Joint Chiefs and its components in the programming, budgeting, and budget execution process, until the memorandum of agreement is finalized.

Transfer of Appropriation Accounts

To execute its programming and budgeting responsibilities properly, the Command needs to know which appropriation accounts it will be managing. The absence of such information makes it difficult for the Command to (1) analyze the budgetary information provided by the services and (2) verify that all service-managed special operations forces programs and items are included. This information is needed so that the Command can prepare and submit its first program objective memorandum, which represents the first step of the fiscal year 1992-97 Six-Year Defense Plan process, by April 1990.

The December 1989 guidance for carrying out the Major Force Program 11 responsibilities should help the Command meet this legislative mandate. The Deputy Secretary directed that the Command will plan, program, and budget for all Major Force Program 11 programs. The Deputy Secretary also directed that with the exception of the Military Personnel appropriation accounts, all other appropriation accounts directly associated with Major Force Program 11 will be transferred to the Command for budget execution, with the approval of and coordination with the Assistant Secretary. The Military Personnel accounts are to remain within the authority of the services.

For the Military Construction appropriation accounts, the services were authorized to retain funding responsibility for completion of the design

of prior year special operations forces projects. In addition, they were to prepare projects for contract solicitation and continue normal design efforts on fiscal year 1991 special operations forces projects approved during fiscal year 1990.

The Deputy Secretary further directed that special operations forces support programs would continue to be programmed by the services with planning input from the Command and that, for the time being, the transfer of accounts would be made to the various DOD appropriations categories. The Command is to have the authority to either execute the programs itself through these categories or suballocate budget execution to the services.

Potential Uncertainties in Programming and Budgeting for Unassigned Forces

There are some uncertainties as to programming and budgeting for special operations forces not assigned to the Command. As discussed in chapter 2, all special operations forces stationed in the United States are required by the legislation to be assigned to the Command, unless excluded by the Secretary of Defense. However, special operations forces based or deployed in a theater of operations outside the United States are assigned to the theater unified combatant commander in whose geographical area of responsibility the forces are stationed or based. As such, programming and budgeting of requirements for these forces are dependent upon the theater commander including the requirements fully in the Command's integrated priority list. However, there is a congressional expectation that the Command will perform programming, budgeting, and execution functions and monitor preparedness for all special operations forces, regardless of command assignment. According to Command officials, special operations forces' needs have traditionally received varying levels of support among the theater commanders. However, none of the command agreements signed or being developed with the theater commands clearly defines responsibilities or relationships to accomplish these particular tasks.

Conclusions

The mandates that prescribe the Command's programming and budgeting responsibilities are being complied with by DOD and the Command. Major Force Program 11, covering special operations forces and programs, has been established, and the Command has been granted head of agency authority and has plans for exercising it. However, the ability of the Command to begin its programming, budgeting, and execution responsibilities by the fiscal year 1992 budgetary cycle depends upon the cooperation of DOD and DOD organizations. In particular, the

Chapter 4
Command Is Preparing to Assume Its
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unsigned agreements (see ch. 2) need to be completed and the Assistant Secretary for Special Operations and Low Intensity needs to have his charter approved. As stated in chapter 2, the process could be made more timely if the Secretary of Defense or his designee were to set realistic milestone dates for getting these agreements signed.

Agency Comments

DOD stated that the Command had submitted its fiscal year 1992 budget on time, and, as of June 1990, all service agreements with respect to the planning, programming, and budgeting system had been finalized.

Description of Component Commands, Schools, and Centers Included in the U.S. Special Operations Command

Army Component

The Army component command is the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, headquartered at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The command is composed of active and reserve component special forces groups, a ranger regiment, psychological operations, and civil affairs units, as well as signal, special operations, aviation, and support units.

Navy Component

The naval component command is the Naval Special Warfare Command, headquartered at the Coronado Naval Amphibious Base, California. The command is composed of Naval Special Warfare Groups, Sea-Air-Land units, special boat units, special warfare and other units, and the Naval Special Warfare Center.

Air Force Component

The Air Force component command is the 23rd Air Force, headquartered at Hurlburt Field, Florida. The command is composed of special operations wings, groups, and squadrons; special tactics, combat control, and weather units; a Central Training Flight; and the U.S. Air Force Special Operations School.

Schools and Centers

The U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, based at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, conducts training for Army special forces, civil affairs and psychological operations units, foreign area officers, and survival, evasion, resistance and escape training. The center and school is also responsible for developing doctrine and new equipment for some Army special operations forces.

The Naval Special Warfare Center at the Coronado Naval Amphibious Base, California, provides instruction and training for personnel of the U.S. Navy, other U.S. armed forces, and allied military personnel in naval special warfare operations. The center is also the principal authority for naval special warfare doctrine in support of maritime strategy.

The U.S. Air Force Special Operations School at Hurlburt Field, Florida, trains selected U.S. and allied personnel in geo-political, psychological, sociological, and military factors inherent in joint special operations. The school also trains selected U.S. personnel for security assistance assignments. Furthermore, the school also helps prepare selected individuals for unconventional warfare and special operations missions.

Legislatively Mandated Missions, Functions, and Activities

Missions

- To conduct a special operations activity or mission 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.
- To exercise command of a selected special operations mission, if directed by the President or the Secretary of Defense.

Functions

- Developing strategy, doctrine, and tactics.
- Training assigned forces.
- Conducting specialized courses of instruction for commissioned and non-commissioned officers.
- Validating requirements.
- Establishing priorities for requirements.
- Ensuring combat readiness of assigned forces.
- Developing and acquiring special operations-peculiar equipment and acquiring special operations-peculiar materiel, supplies, and services.
- Ensuring the interoperability of equipment and forces.
- Formulating and submitting requirements for intelligence support.
- Monitoring promotions, assignments, retention, training, and professional military education of special operations forces officers.
- Monitoring the preparedness of special operations forces assigned to other unified combatant commands to carry out assigned missions.
- Preparing and submitting to the Secretary of Defense program recommendations and budget proposals for special operations forces and for other forces assigned to the special operations command.
- Exercising 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 action involves short duration strikes and other small scale offensive actions (1) to seize, destroy, or inflict damage on a specified target or (2) to destroy, capture, or recover designated personnel or material. In the conduct of these operations, special operations forces may employ raid, ambush, or direct assault tactics; emplace mines and other munitions; conduct standoff attacks by fire from air, ground, or maritime platforms; provide terminal guidance for precision guided munitions; and conduct independent sabotage.
- Strategic reconnaissance is conducted to obtain or verify, by visual observation or other collection methods, information concerning the capabilities, intentions, and activities of an actual or potential enemy, or

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

- to secure data concerning the meteorological, hydrological, geographic, or demographic characteristics of a particular area. It includes target acquisition, area assessment, and post-strike reconnaissance.
- Unconventional warfare is a broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration, predominantly conducted by indigenous or surrogate forces that are organized, trained, equipped, supported, and directed in varying degrees by an external sources. It includes guerrilla warfare and other direct offensive, low visibility, covert or clandestine operations, as well as the indirect activities of subversion, sabotage, intelligence collection, and evasion and escape.
 - Foreign internal defense is the participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency. The primary role of special operations forces in this interagency activity is to train, advise, and otherwise assist host nation military and paramilitary forces.
 - Civil affairs.
 - Psychological operations.
 - Counter-terrorism involves offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, and respond to terrorism.
 - Humanitarian assistance is provided by DOD forces, as directed by appropriate authority, in the aftermath of natural or man-made disasters to help reduce conditions that present a serious threat to life and property. Assistance provided by U.S. forces is limited in scope and duration and is designed to supplement the efforts of civilian authorities that have primary responsibility for providing such assistance.
 - Theater search and rescue.
 - Other activities specified by the President or the Secretary of Defense.

Organizations Visited During the Review

Office of Secretary of Defense, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict, Washington, D.C.

Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Headquarters, U.S. Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida

Washington Office, U.S. Special Operations Command, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Headquarters, U.S. Army Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg, North Carolina

Headquarters, Joint Special Operations Command, Ft. Bragg, North Carolina

Headquarters, 23rd Air Force, Military Airlift Command, U.S. Air Force, Hurlburt Field, Florida

Headquarters, Naval Special Warfare Command, Coronado, California

Headquarters, Naval Special Warfare Group 2, Little Creek Naval Amphibious Base, Virginia

Headquarters, Special Operations Command, U.S. Central Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida

Special Operations Policy Advisory Group, Washington, D.C.

Comments From the Department of Defense



SPECIAL OPERATIONS/
LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-2500

18 JUL 1990

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

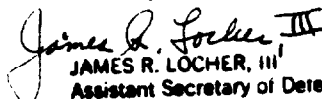
Dear Mr. Conahan:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) Draft Report, "SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND: Progress in Implementing Legislative Mandates," dated June 4, 1990 (GAO Code 392460), OSD Case 8364. The Department generally agrees with the GAO findings and recommendations.

As discussed in the enclosure, the United States Special Operations Command is making progress toward full implementation of the legislation which directed its establishment. The Commander in Chief of the U.S. Special Operations Command recently submitted his first Program Objectives Memorandum, which resources Special Operations Forces in FY 1992 - FY 1997. Forces have been assigned to the Command consistent with the authority granted to the Secretary of Defense. Essential agreements, which establish procedures and responsibilities between the Services and the Command, are either currently in place or will be completed by September 30, 1990. Finally, significant work has been accomplished on the U.S. Special Operations Command Joint Mission Analysis, which is scheduled to be completed by mid-1991. That comprehensive document will become the baseline for future joint requirements for Special Operations Forces.

The detailed DoD comments on the report findings and recommendations are provided in the enclosure. (Several additional technical comments were provided separately to the GAO staff.) The Department appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft report.

Sincerely,


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

Enclosures:
As stated

GAO DRAFT REPORT - DATED JUNE 4, 1990
(GAO CODE 392460) OSD CASE 8364

"SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND: PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING
LEGISLATIVE MANDATES"

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS

* * * * *

FINDINGS

FINDING A: Background: Legislative Mandates For Special Operations. The GAO reported that, in November 1986, as a result of serious deficiencies in the capabilities of the U.S. to conduct special operations and engage in low intensity conflict, the Congress enacted Public Law 99-661 to revitalize special operations. The GAO explained that the law directed the President, through the Secretary of Defense, to (1) establish an Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict and (2) establish a unified command for special operations forces--the U.S. Special Operations Command. The GAO reported that the legislation identified the forces to be assigned and defined the activities and functions of the new Command.

The GAO reported that additional reforms were mandated by the Congress in 1987 and 1988. The GAO explained that Public Law 100-180, enacted in December 1987, directed the Army to act as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, until the office was filled by appointment--and directed the Secretary of Defense to provide sufficient resources for the Command to carry out its duties and responsibilities. The GAO noted that the conference report accompanying the legislation expressed concern that the DoD was delaying or blocking implementation of the reforms and asserted insufficient progress had been made. The GAO reported that, as a result, in September 1988, the Congress mandated additional responsibilities and authority for the Commander in Chief of the Special Operations Command, by enacting Public Law 100-456. The GAO reported that those new responsibilities included the following:

- preparing and submitting to the Secretary of Defense program recommendations and budget proposals for special operation forces assigned to the other unified combatant commands.

The GAO noted that the Armed Services Committee conference report directed the Command to assume program and budget responsibilities as soon as possible, but no later than the resource allocation cycle for FY 1992. (p. 2, pp. 11-13/GAO Draft Report)

1

Enclosure

Now on pp. 2 and 12-14.

Appendix IV
Comments From the Department of Defense

DoD RESPONSE: Concur. It should also be recognized that the Command has already assumed execution responsibility for FY 1991 resources and, in addition, has prepared and submitted its first Program Objectives Memorandum which resources Special Operations Forces programs for FY 1992- FY 1997.

- **FINDING B: Integration of Special Operations Forces.** The GAO reported that, under the legislation creating the Special Operations Command, special operations forces stationed in the U.S. were to be assigned to the Command, while those based outside the U.S. were assigned to the appropriate unified combatant theater commanders. The GAO found that, by April 1988, the Special Operations Command had assumed operational command of (1) the Army Special Operations Command, (2) the 23rd Air Force, and (3) the Naval Special Warfare Command--while the Joint Special Operations Command was added in August 1988.

The GAO also pointed out that the legislation permits the Secretary of Defense to designate and assign forces not identified by the legislation and to exclude forces that were identified. The GAO found that the Secretary has exercised his authority several times since the Command was established. The GAO explained that, at the outset, the assignment of forces did not include Army and Air Force civil affairs and psychological operations units, nor any units operating under the Navy Special Warfare Command. The GAO observed that since then, the Secretary has assigned forces from each of these groups to the Special Operations Command. The GAO also found that some forces categorized as having a other than primary special operations mission were not assigned to the Command. The GAO reported, for example, that units referenced in the legislation, but not assigned include (1) all Marine Corps units, (2) certain kinds of specially trained Air Force crews and their aircraft, and (3) two Naval Reserve helicopter units. The GAO concluded that the additions and exclusions by the Secretary of Defense are consistent with the authority granted by the legislation. The GAO also concluded that the Command is making progress in integrating special operations forces. (p. 3, pp. 17-21/GAO Draft Report)

DoD RESPONSE: Partially Concur. The DoD agrees with the GAO conclusion that additions and exclusions by the Secretary of Defense are consistent with the authority granted by the legislation. However, the DoD does not agree with the GAO legislative interpretation that all United States Marine Corps units should be assigned to the Command. Two points are submitted in clarification:

Units specifically referenced by legislation as Special Operations Forces are, "...those forces of the armed forces that are identified as core or augmenting forces in Annex E of the JCS Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan dated December 17, 1985 (or) are described in the Terms of Reference and Concept Operation Plan for the Joint Special Operations Command, as in

Appendix IV
Comments From the Department of Defense

effect 1 April 1986." (Section 167, National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1987). United States Marine Corps forces are not listed in either set of documents.

The United States Marine Corps does not have designated special operations forces. Instead, selected United States Marine Corps units train for and are designated as "special operations capable" prior to deployment.

The May 1990 creation of the Air Force Special Operations Command (formally 23rd Air Force), as recommended by the Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, clarified the command relationship for the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Special Operations Command. The Air Force Special Operations Command is now the Air Component to U.S. Special Operations Command.

• **FINDING C: Progress In Implementing Other Legislative Mandates.** The GAO found that, as of March 1990, about 65 percent of the agreements the Special Operations Command considers essential to implementing the legislative mandates fully had been completed. The GAO explained that the Command has many responsibilities that are unique for a unified command, responsibilities which were previously the province of the Services and other DoD organizations. The GAO reported therefore, that in order to fully and successfully carry out the changes required by the mandates, the Command needs to have formal, signed agreements that will delineate each party's role and responsibilities, as well as their relationships with each other.

The GAO found that, while the Command is making progress in developing the agreements, as of March 1990, 10 of 29 agreements the Command considers essential in carrying out its legislative mandates were still incomplete. The GAO observed that the completion of those agreements is important, because they will define and clarify the Command's role and responsibilities within the Defense community. The GAO reported that it is the position of the Special Operations Command that the substantive issues have been finalized and agreed to by the affected parties and that, due to the complexity of the agreements, accuracy has been placed ahead of speed in their completion. The GAO found, however, that with the exception of the agreements directly applicable to the budget, there are no milestone dates established for completing the agreements. The GAO also found that the Special Operations Command is continuing to implement a joint baseline master plan and an action plan for integrating special operations forces into the Command, but many of the milestones governing functions such as communications, readiness, training and operations, force structure, and personnel are not scheduled to be reached for several years. The GAO noted that it was unable to quantify the Command's progress, due to the manner in which the Special Operations Command implements and tracks the master plan. The GAO concluded that the Command's ability to complete the integration process will be constrained until it obtains all the major agreements. The GAO also concluded that the process could be made more timely if the Secretary of Defense or his designee set realistic milestone dates for achieving these agreements. (p. 4, pp. 21-27/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 3 and 19-23.

Appendix IV
Comments From the Department of Defense

DoD RESPONSE: Concur. Since the GAO completed its review, however, the Services have made progress in completing the remaining ten agreements referenced by the GAO. One of the agreements was finalized and signed in June 1990, seven of the remaining nine agreements are expected to be signed by the close of the fiscal year, and one agreement is no longer needed. The requirement for an agreement between the U.S. Special Operations Command and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict will be reevaluated, with a decision by September 30, 1990.

With the creation of the new Air Force Special Operations Command, time is required to allow the Command to establish its responsibilities and relationships. The U.S. Special Operations Command and the U.S. Air Force have agreed to allow one year for the new headquarters to become established, while updating existing agreements.

• **FINDING D: Adequacy And Appropriateness Of Requested Funding.** The GAO reported that, by creating a separate major force program category for special operations forces, the Congress wanted to highlight the resources needed to ensure adequate consideration for funding special operations forces and to provide increased visibility over their revitalization. The GAO found, however, that as in previous years, funding for special operations programs and related needs for FY 1990, is dispersed throughout many of the other ten major force programs and managed by the Services and other DoD organizations. The GAO reported that the requested funding of special operations forces needs for FY 1990 and FY 1991, was about \$3.1 billion and \$2.3 billion, respectively. The GAO found, however, that in order to prepare its budget submissions, the Special Operations Command relied on program data provided separately by the Services and other DoD organizations. The GAO concluded, however, that the support data provided by the Services was generally based on the requirements and priorities of their individual plans--rather than the viewpoint or priorities of the Special Operations Command. The GAO further concluded that, as a result, the adequacy or appropriateness of the funding requested for FY 1990 and FY 1991 is uncertain. (p. 4, pp. 29-32/GAO Draft Report)

DoD RESPONSE: Concur. Historically, programs for Special Operations Forces have not been separately identified within the Service budgets. As a result, the Command inherited a program that was not balanced and did not meet evolving requirements. Beginning in FY 1991 all Special Operations Forces-specific budget execution responsibilities will be assumed by the Special Operations Command. The Command's recent development and submission of the FY 1992-FY 1997 Program Objectives Memorandum is the first step in authorizing the Command to program its own resources.

• **FINDING E: Special Operations Forces Requirements Being Validated.** The GAO found that the Special Operations Command is currently analyzing special operations missions, in coordination with the Services, the other unified commands, and other Federal agencies--in order to identify joint theater and national mission area requirements for special operations. According to the GAO, the joint mission analysis is expected to result in a complete and

Now on pp. 3 and 25-27.

Now on pp. 3 and 27.

detailed definition and validation from the Command's joint point of view of special operations forces mission and resource requirements in all theaters. The GAO noted that preparation of the joint mission analysis began in November 1987, with drafting of the Command's Operational Concepts. The GAO reported that a member of the Joint Studies Analysis Group said they expect to complete all of the analysis and get agreement with all the unified combatant theater commands by June 1991. The GAO observed that, until the Command completes its analysis, it (the GAO) can not determine whether the funding requested is adequate. (p. 4, p. 29, pp. 32-33/GAO Draft Report)

DoD RESPONSE: Concur. The Command has now completed the theater-specific Joint Mission Analysis for U.S. Southern Command, U.S. Pacific Command, and Korea. While other theater Joint Mission Analyses are on-going, the final U.S. Special Operations Command Joint Mission Analysis is not scheduled to be completed until mid-1991.

• **FINDING F: Compliance of the DoD With Mandated Programming And Budgeting Responsibilities.** The GAO reported that the Congress directed the DoD to take three specific actions to ensure that the Command would assume programming and budgeting responsibilities for all special operations forces as soon as possible, but no later than for the budget beginning with the FY 1992 budgetary cycle, as follows:

- First, the GAO reported that the 1986 legislation required the Secretary of Defense to create a major force program for special operations forces in the Five Year Defense Plan.
- The GAO noted that, in December 1987, the Congress set a 30-day deadline for creation of this force program. The GAO found that the Secretary of Defense certified that the DoD established the Major Force Program 11 category in the Five Year Defense Plan in January 1988, but he did not delegate the authority to carry out its associated program and budget development responsibilities until January 1989. The GAO concluded that the DoD compliance with this mandate was completed on time, but the delegation of the necessary authority to the Command was not timely. The GAO reported that the 1987 legislation also directed the Secretary of Defense to grant Head of Agency authority to the Command's commander-in-chief to permit the Command to develop and acquire special operations-peculiar equipment, supplies and services identified in the Major Force Program 11 budget.
- In addition, the GAO reported that the 1988 legislation required that the Command be responsible for preparing and submitting budget proposals for special operations forces. The GAO noted that the Conference Report accompanying this legislation directed the Command assume this responsibility as soon as possible, but no later than the 1992 budget cycle. The GAO found that the Secretary of Defense granted Head of Agency authority to the commander-in-chief of the Command in May 1988.

The GAO explained that, in order for the Special Operations command to be able to prepare and submit budget proposals for the FY 1992 budget cycle, specific authority had to be delegated to the Command--and the rest of the DoD community directed to cooperate in the effort. The GAO found that the authority delegated to the Command in January 1989, was amended by the Deputy Secretary of Defense in a Program Budget Decision Memorandum issued December 13, 1989. According to the GAO, that document speeded up the process by authorizing the Command to assume all Program 11 responsibilities beginning with FY 1991--and also directed the transfer of funds from various accounts managed by the Services and other DoD organizations to accounts managed by the Command. The GAO reported that the January 1989, memorandum also directed the DoD organizations to cooperate with, and provide the Command with, the resources and information needed to perform its Programs 11 tasks, but did not specify a timetable for doing so. The GAO concluded the absence of an enforceable schedule or milestones could hamper the ability of the Command to fully meet the legislative mandates. The GAO further reported that, on December 1, 1989, the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued a memorandum specifying guidance and mandating a milestone date of December 15, 1989, for completing all the necessary agreements. The GAO found, however, that at least as of March 1990, the agreements had not been completed. The GAO concluded that the DoD is complying with the mandates that prescribe the Command's programming and budgeting responsibilities. The GAO further concluded, however, that the progress could be more timely, if realistic milestone dates were set for getting the agreements signed. (pp. 3-5, pp. 34-37, p. 41/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 29-31.

DoD Response: Concur. The U.S. Special Operations Command prepared and submitted its first Program Objective Memorandum for FY 1992-1997. As of June 1990, all Service agreements, with respect to the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System, have been finalized. (See also the DoD response to Recommendation 1.)

• Finding G: Command Progress in Undertaking Its Responsibilities. The GAO found that the Command has taken steps to undertake its program, budget development, budget execution, and acquisition responsibilities. As examples, the GAO reported that the Command has (1) developed an organizational structure, (2) developed and tested information systems to assist in the preparation and execution of program budget estimates, and (3) was authorized most of the staffing it requested to carry out those responsibilities. The GAO also observed, however, that while the Command has made progress in some areas, it still needs the cooperation from other DoD organizations to meet the mandated FY 1992 deadline for assuming fully its programming and budgeting responsibilities. The GAO pointed out that the Command needs to obtain a variety of agreements with the Services and other DoD organizations, and needs their cooperation to help carry out the programming and budgeting preparation and execution functions.

As one example, the GAO reported that the Command and the Assistant Secretary for Special Operations and Low Intensity still need to clarify their relationships. The GAO found, however, that as of March 1990, agreement on those responsibilities had not been reached. The GAO also reported that, in order to properly execute its programming and budgeting

responsibilities, the Command needed to know which appropriation accounts it will be managing so that it can prepare and submit its first program objective memorandum, due by the end of April 1990. The GAO observed that the December 1989 guidance for carrying out the Major Forces Program 11 responsibilities should help the Command and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity meet this legislative mandate.

Finally, the GAO noted that there are some uncertainties as to programming and budgeting for special operations forces not assigned to the Command. In this regard, the GAO reported that special operations forces based or deployed outside the U.S. are assigned to the theater commander in whose geographical area of responsibility the forces are stationed or based. The GAO explained that, as such, both the requirements and budgets of those forces are included in the priority list of the theater commander. According to the GAO, however, the legislative mandate requires the Command to perform certain programming and budgeting functions and monitor preparedness for all special operations forces, regardless of command assignment. The GAO found that none of the command agreements consummated or being developed with the theater commands defines responsibilities or relationships to accomplish this particular legislative mandate. Overall, the GAO concluded that the Command has made progress in undertaking its programming and budgeting responsibilities. (pp. 3-5, p. 34, pp. 37-41/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 4 and 31-33.

DoD RESPONSE: Concur. The statement, "However, special operations forces based or deployed in a theater of operations outside the United States are assigned to the theater unified combatant commander in whose geographical area of responsibility the forces are stationed or based. As such, not only are their requirements included in the integrated priority list of the theater commander, but so are their budgets." ...is misleading. Service centrally managed resources, such as depot maintenance and base operating support, are funded through Service components of the unified commands for all forces, including Special Operations Forces. However, all Special Operations Forces-specific resources are planned, programmed, budgeted, and executed by U.S. Special Operations Command. The Department is continuing to evaluate Special Operations Forces-related requirements to determine if they should fall under the auspices of the Special Operations Command.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense (1) set specific milestone dates for completing and executing all of the essential agreements between the Special Operations Command and the Services and other DoD organizations and (2) take appropriate steps to help ensure that such milestones are met. (p. 5, p. 28/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 4 and 24.

Appendix IV
Comments From the Department of Defense

DoD RESPONSE: Concur. However, the status of agreements currently under final coordination with Services must be taken into account. Primary agreements concerning readiness and training, research and development, intelligence activities, combatting terrorism, and transfer of classified programs, are in final review for signature by the individual Services. Of the ten incomplete agreements noted by the GAO in March 1990, eight have now been completed or are scheduled to be completed and signed by September 30, 1990, and one has been determined to be no longer required (ie., the agreement related to Air Force Intelligence Activities). The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict will continue to monitor the establishment and execution of all existing and future essential agreements between U.S. Special Operations Command, the Services, and other DoD organizations. The Joint Staff remains the focal point for operational matters.

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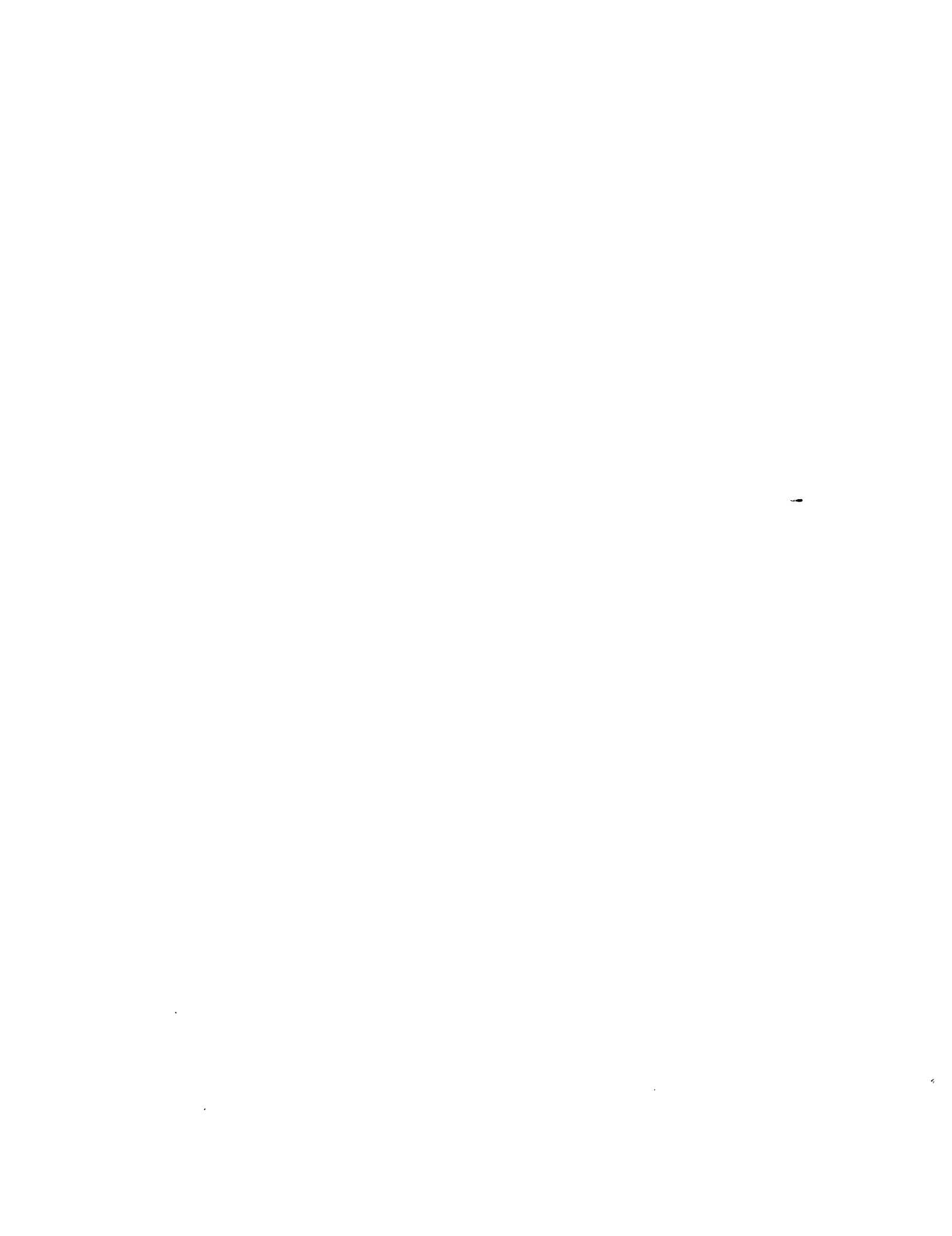
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