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Improvements Needed in Defense Programs for Training  
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Report to Secretary, Department of Defense; by Fred J. Shafer,  
Director, Logistics and Communications Div.

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The Department of Defense's (DOD's) traffic management training programs lack uniformity, and differences exist in the selection of personnel for traffic management training. Findings/Conclusions: DOD spends over \$3 billion a year for commercial transportation services. Each year it is involved in hundreds of thousands of transportation procurements subject to numerous statutes, policies, regulations, directives, and commercial and industrial fund tariffs. The most important element in the traffic management programs is the caliber of the people who do the work. Although the skills and requirements for traffic management positions throughout the Department are essentially the same, there is a diversity of training philosophies among the services. Wide differences exist among the three services in the selection of traffic management personnel for training. Recommendations: The Department of Defense should: consider making the Navy's Transportation School the primary interservice traffic management facility; include instruction in intermodalism and foreign military sales in school curricula; require in-residence instruction for all installation transportation officers; and reexamine the staffing of installation transportation officer positions and determine the extent to which senior enlisted personnel could replace officers and civilians. (Author/SC)

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**UNITED STATES  
GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE**

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# Improvements Needed In Defense Programs For Training Transportation Officers And Agents

## Department of Defense

The Department of Defense's traffic management training programs lack uniformity, and differences exist in the selection of personnel for traffic management training. Also, we found officers and civilians occupying traffic management positions which could be staffed by enlisted personnel. The Department should:

- Consider making the Navy's Transportation School the primary interservice traffic management facility.
- Include instruction in intermodalism and foreign military sales in school curriculums.
- Require in-residence instruction for all installation transportation officers.
- Reexamine the staffing of installation transportation officer positions and determine the extent to which senior enlisted personnel could replace officers and civilians.



UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

LOGISTICS AND COMMUNICATIONS  
DIVISION

B-1C9179

The Honorable  
The Secretary of Defense

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We surveyed the Department of Defense's training programs for transportation officers and agents but do not plan to study these matters in further detail. We are providing the following observations which may be useful in strengthening the services' training programs.

The Department spends over \$3 billion a year for commercial transportation services. Each year it is involved in hundreds of thousands of transportation procurements subject to numerous statutes, policies, regulations, directives, and commercial and industrial fund tariffs.

The most important element in the traffic management programs is the caliber of the people who do the work. The Department's traffic management personnel must have a great deal of special knowledge, skill, and dedication if the Nation's defense and public interest are to be well served.

In March 1976 the Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics was concerned about the qualifications of officers assigned to installation transportation officer (ITO) positions. He said in part:

"I am concerned about the professional qualifications and quality of officers assigned to Installation Transportation Office (ITO) positions in the field. I have received several recent indications from such sources as the DAIG [Department of the Army Inspector General], GAO, and the Commander, MTMC [Military Traffic Management Command], that there are serious deficiencies in the educational program and career development of personnel occupying ITO positions.

"The magnitude of the portion of the Army's budget which ITO's obligate and the significant impact which the services they provide have on the morale and welfare of soldiers and their families warrants intensive management. We must insure that qualified personnel serve in such positions of responsibility."

\* \* \* \* \*

"I am convinced that formal education in transportation management is essential to develop technical skills of ITO's in order to improve management capability in the field to a level of competence commensurate with the significance of this function. \* \* \*"

We agree with these observations. The primary method of obtaining and maintaining the skills necessary to efficiently manage these transportation activities is through the Department's training programs. The following are our suggestions for improving these programs.

NEED FOR UNIFORMITY IN THE DEPARTMENT'S TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Although the skills and requirements for traffic management positions throughout the Department are essentially the same, we found a diversity in training philosophies among the services.

For example, the Army's Training and Doctrine Command has directed all Department of the Army schools to deinstitutionalize as many training courses as possible. This program aims at avoiding formalized training as much as possible to keep soldiers with their units for most of their service time. The Training Command set two primary objectives for the Army's Training School: (1) to provide formal training for "hard skills" (for example, helicopter maintenance and stevedoring abilities) which must be taught in school and (2) to develop "export training packages" to be sent to Army units for in-house administration. The Training Command considers traffic management a "soft skill" which can be learned through correspondence. We disagree.

Correspondence courses supplemented by indepth on-the-job training would foster a limited technical competence. Traffic management, which we define as the direction of

efforts concerned with shipment of military cargo, has long been recognized as a discipline requiring college-level, in-residence training. Typical college courses in transportation, traffic management, and the broader topics of distribution management are taught to senior undergraduate and graduate students.

In the Navy most basic traffic management skills, good or bad, are acquired through on-the-job training. The Navy has an excellent traffic management school at Oakland, California, which provides the type of in-residence, college-level courses we believe necessary to develop well-trained, competent traffic managers. However, attendance at this facility is voluntary.

The Air Force, on the other hand, requires most of its traffic managers to attend in-residence transportation courses appropriate to the complexity of the positions to which they are to be assigned. We believe the Air Force's training philosophy is more likely to produce adequately trained traffic managers.

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES EXIST  
IN THE SELECTION OF PERSONNEL  
FOR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Wide differences exist among the three services in selecting traffic management personnel for training. For example, almost all Army career transportation officers attend the transportation officers advanced course. Only about half of the noncommissioned officers in the traffic management career field are school trained. We were unable to determine how many Department of the Army civilians have been school trained. The only training available to these civilians consists of specialized short courses and correspondence courses which are not required for career development.

In the Air Force virtually all officers and noncommissioned officers in the traffic management field are school trained. As in the Army no data was available to determine the extent to which Air Force civilians have been school trained. They also normally attend specialized short courses subject to school quotas and funding.

Navy officers assigned to traffic management positions are not required to be trained by the Navy's Transportation School. However, most Navy transportation officers choose

to attend the school. Few Navy enlisted personnel occupy traffic management positions. Thus, they do not have to be school trained. Navy civilian traffic managers are not required to be school trained. However, they may volunteer for the Navy's Transportation School and many do so.

THE NAVY'S SCHOOL IS MOST ACCESSIBLE  
TO TRANSPORTATION ACTIVITIES

The Navy's Transportation School, located in Oakland, California, is close to a variety of military and civilian transportation system activities. Consequently, its classroom instruction can be readily supplemented by visits to such activities. The training schools of the Army and the Air Force, for the most part, do not have this advantage. Therefore, the Navy school would seem to be the logical location for establishing the primary interservice traffic management training facility, with a program appropriately designed for the needs of all the services.

The Navy school has other favorable aspects. Its traffic management curriculum is the most intensive (88 hours) and advanced of the three service schools. Also the Commandant of the Navy school told us that the classroom facilities could accommodate the additional workload. A slight increase in the teaching staff might be necessary; however, this should be offset by commensurate reductions in the staffs of the Army and Air Force schools.

The Air Force school is located at Sheppard Air Force Base, Wichita Falls, Texas. From a transportation operations viewpoint, this school is poorly located. The Air Force deals with this handicap by scheduling 1-week trips to Oakland to review the transportation operations that the Navy school has available on a continuing basis at no expense.

The Army's Transportation School at Fort Eustis, Virginia, is better located than the Air Force school since it is near Norfolk. Visits to rail and truck carriers as well as sea container operators are possible. However, this school lacks the wide range of transportation activities which are accessible to the Navy's school, and it does not now offer the college-type transportation and traffic management training so well developed at the Navy school.

It should be noted that the Department's Inter-service Training Review Organization has been established to review

the services' training courses and, when a consensus has been reached, recommend training courses for consolidation. At this time, the Organization has taken no position on the consolidation of traffic management training.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED IN  
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

At the Army's Transportation School, the transportation officers' advanced course, which covers 26 weeks of intensive training, devoted less than 6 hours to defense traffic management (that is, the procedures and problems involved in moving Army cargo by commercial common carriers). A lot of time is spent on tactics; other logistic and administrative matters; and service-peculiar transportation subjects, such as the operation of Army boat, truck, and rail units. We found a need for training in the special problems involved in transporting foreign military sales materiel shipments, which now constitute about 40 percent of the Army's transportation work.

We also found a lack of training in the complex area of "intermodalism"--the shipment of cargo from point to point by more than one means of transport. Obvious difficulties exist in coordinating and dealing with many carriers. The mechanics of intermodalism are known. The subject, one of the most important in today's transportation world, is not taught by any of the transportation schools even though most shipments in the Department's distribution system involve intermodalism. We believe that the subjects of foreign military sales transportation and intermodalism should be included in defense traffic management instruction.

We reviewed a number of Army correspondence courses and found some to be outdated. Such courses are supposed to be updated every 3 years, yet some have not been revised for more than 5 years. For example, the "Traffic Management in Procurement" course, which had not been reviewed or revised since 1969, contained some erroneous and misleading passages. Several other courses had similar problems.

An unresolved paradox exists under the Training Command's policy which requires the Army schools to eliminate formal classroom training as much as possible. Instead, the schools are to develop correspondence courses to be administered by the individual commands. However, the Army's Transportation School develops its correspondence courses from classroom instructors' lesson plans. Most classroom instructors and classroom training in traffic management have been or are

scheduled to be eliminated. Thus, this basis for preparing and updating traffic management correspondence courses will no longer be available. At the time of our review, there were no plans to retain this capability and expertise at the school.

The Air Force's Transportation School provides a 400-hour, 10-week technical transportation training course emphasizing the air mode. Included in the course is the aforementioned 1-week visit to various defense transportation activities in the Oakland area.

The curriculum is designed to produce transportation expertise within officer and noncommissioned officer corps. As with the Army, the Air Force school does not provide instruction on the problems involved with the shipment of foreign military sales materiel and intermodalism.

The Navy's Transportation School has the most comprehensive curriculum of the three schools we reviewed. Subjects cover the full range of physical distribution. An attempt to cover intermodalism problems is made under the heading of "Quantitative Aspects of Distribution Management." This subject embraces the systems aspects of physical distribution, including transportation, intermodal or other, as part of the totally integrated system.

The Navy school has recently instituted a special course addressing the problems involved with transportation under the foreign military sales program.

#### NEED TO REEXAMINE STAFFING FOR ITO POSITIONS

There is a need for the services to reexamine the installation transportation officer positions to determine whether enlisted personnel could replace most, if not all, of the officers and many of the civilians currently assigned. There are more than 1,500 ITO positions in the Department which are normally staffed with officers in grades 0-3 and 0-4 or civilians in grades GS-9, GS-11, and GS-12. We believe that enlisted personnel in grades E-7, E-8, and E-9, if properly trained, could more than adequately perform the duties of these ITOs at less cost. Our premise is based on the fact that enlisted personnel assigned to traffic management normally progress through assignments which keep them close to the details of day-to-day operations. Through normal career rotation, they are assigned to various traffic

management jobs throughout the world. This experience allows them to obtain perspective and develop close rapport with receivers of the shipments. For example, in the area of household goods movements, enlisted personnel are likely to have had first-hand experience with poor service, loss, and damage, thus creating empathy with the service member.

An officer with a traffic management job classification will normally serve only one or two working tours. After that his assignments will probably be to a headquarters level or to an entirely different field, such as procurement or comptroller. Generally, the enlisted person's career will be devoted to the "nuts and bolts" of traffic management.

Civilian traffic managers, unlike officers, generally have continuous assignments at the working traffic management level. However, they rarely are reassigned from one location to another, and thus they cannot acquire the breadth of experience acquired by enlisted personnel.

The Air Force leads in the use of enlisted personnel assigned to key transportation management positions. The Army makes good use of its enlisted personnel in this area, but additional emphasis is needed. Both the Army and the Air Force train enlisted personnel extensively in the transportation area. The Navy has few enlisted personnel in transportation management positions. We consider this a deficiency in the Navy's personnel management program. We also believe that increased use of enlisted personnel would clearly result in substantial economic benefits.

#### SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS

In summary, we believe:

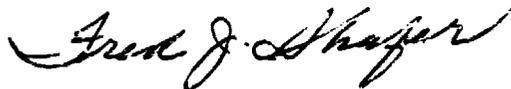
- Consideration should be given to making the Navy's school the primary interservice traffic management training facility, with a program designed for the needs of all the services. The Army and the Air Force should continue to teach those transportation subjects peculiar to each service.
- Comprehensive instruction covering the problems associated with intermodalism and the shipment of foreign military sales materiel should be included in the services' transportation school curriculums.
- In-residence training of installation transportation officers should be required.

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--The Department should reexamine the staffing of the installation transportation officer positions and determine the extent to which senior enlisted personnel can replace the officers and civilians occupying these positions.

We would appreciate hearing your views on our observations. If you have questions or comments, please contact Mr. Allen W. Sumner at 275-3637.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fred J. Shafer".

Fred J. Shafer  
Director