

August 1990

LEGISLATIVE STUDY
MISSIONS

Information on
Defense Department-
Sponsored Visits to
Turkey



**National Security and
International Affairs Division**

B-240534

August 28, 1990

The Honorable Gus Yatron
Chairman, Subcommittee on Human Rights
and International Organizations
Committee on Foreign Affairs
House of Representatives

The Honorable William S. Broomfield
Ranking Republican Member
Committee on Foreign Affairs
House of Representatives

In response to your request, we are providing information on the Defense Department's program to send congressional staff with executive branch officials on study missions to the Republic of Turkey. In this fact sheet, we discuss (1) the origin of the program; (2) the number of program participants and types of aircraft used; (3) the total cost of the program since its inception; (4) the process used to select mission participants; (5) the extent, if any, of U.S. private sector cooperation in this program; (6) the extent of involvement by Turkish officials; and (7) the number of similar programs with other countries.

Results in Brief

We found the following:

- The program to send congressional staff on study missions to Turkey began in 1985 because the executive branch was having difficulty in obtaining security assistance funding for Turkey.
- A total of 43 participants went on the four study missions. Of this total, 40 individuals, one of whom went on two missions, were legislative staff, while two were from the Congressional Research Service.
- The estimated in-country cost for the four study missions was about \$24,500 for daily living expenses and in-country transportation aboard C-12 aircraft. In addition, estimated round-trip international transportation costs of \$133,000 can be attributed to the missions as their share of the military C-135 air flights between the United States and Turkey.
- Program participants were selected based on their availability and the judgment of the Defense official who manages the program.
- The U.S. private sector is not involved with the program.
- Turkish officials had no role in selecting program participants and generally had no contact with them until they had arrived in Turkey.
- No similar programs exist with other countries.

Program Origin

In October 1981, the Secretary of Defense proposed establishing a high-level defense group to meet with high-level Turkish officials to discuss policy-related issues. The group is headed by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy and generally includes between 12 and 15 members from various Defense organizations and the Department of State. Since 1981, the group has had nine meetings with Turkish officials. The first meeting was held in West Germany, and the last eight meetings were held in Turkey. At the request of the Turkish government, a 10th trip, scheduled for March 1990, was postponed and may be rescheduled later this year.

In 1985, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy initiated a program to take congressional staffers to Turkey as part of the high-level defense group. The program's purposes are to promote a general understanding of U.S. objectives in Turkey, to give the staffers the opportunity to meet with Turkish officials to discuss relevant issues, and to promote an understanding of the political-military importance of Turkey in the Eastern Mediterranean and its relationship to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The program manager, a civilian employee in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy, stated that the program was created because the executive branch was having difficulty in obtaining security assistance funding for Turkey from the legislative branch due to a lack of information and understanding about Turkey's importance.

Program Activity

A total of 43 legislative participants—40 congressional staff members, one of whom went twice, and 2 staff from the Congressional Research Service—went on the four study missions conducted since 1985. The first two missions lasted about 5 days, while the last two missions lasted about a week. The participants received briefings and met with U.S. military and U.S. embassy officials as well as high-level Turkish military and civilian leaders to discuss military and political issues. The study missions also visited military installations in Turkey.

In-Country Costs

We estimate that the total in-country cost associated with the four study missions to Turkey was about \$24,500 for living expenses and trips taken aboard C-12 aircraft. As shown in table 1, the total cost for the four missions for room and board, local transportation, and other miscellaneous expenses was about \$15,000, which the Department paid for from operation and maintenance funds.

Table 1: In-Country Living Costs of the Study Missions

Date of mission	Number of personnel	Total living expenses
06/21/85 - 06/26/85	11	\$2,761
02/21/86 - 02/25/86	10	2,456
12/06/86 - 12/13/86	12	4,670
04/12/88 - 04/19/88	10	5,161
Total	43	\$15,048

According to the program manager, participants took trips while in Turkey to the Kayseri tank modernization facility, the Golcuk naval facility, and the Eskisehir F-16 facility. The participants were transported aboard C-12 aircraft. The official stated that on each visit, except the December 1986 visit, the participants were divided into three groups, with each group visiting one of the facilities. This official stated that on the December 1986 visit, the participants were divided into two groups and visited two of the three facilities.

No records were available to show costs associated with trips other than for the three trips taken during the April 1988 mission. According to the U.S. Embassy in Turkey, three C-12 aircraft were used to transport program participants at an estimated cost of about \$2,600. Assuming the cost per trip taken within Turkey during the other three missions was about the same as the cost for the April 1988 mission, the estimated total cost for all trips taken by the four missions within Turkey was about \$9,500.

Allocation of International Transportation Costs

The Defense Department also incurred costs for round-trip transportation between the United States and Turkey for both the high-level defense group and the study missions. Based on Defense Department data on the round-trip flight time and the only available fiscal year (1988) hourly cost of \$3,945 for operating a C-135 aircraft with a maximum capacity of 32 seats, we estimated the maximum total aircraft cost for the high-level defense group and the study mission participants to be about \$395,000. To determine the costs attributable to each of the congressional study missions, we divided the maximum aircraft cost by 32 seats to obtain a cost per seat, and multiplied this figure by the number of participants in the study mission. Based on this calculation, we estimate that, at maximum, about \$133,000 of the total aircraft operation cost can be attributed to the missions. These costs are shown in table 2.

Table 2: Estimated Costs for International Flights Associated With Congressional Study Missions

Date	Number of participants	Total aircraft cost for C-135	Cost attributable to study mission
06/85	11	\$102,570	\$35,258
02/86	10	93,694	29,279
12/86	12	101,584	38,094
04/88	10	97,639	30,512
Total	43	\$395,487	\$133,143

Although these costs can be attributed to the study missions, the Defense Department would have incurred the costs for the aircraft to transport the high-level defense group regardless of whether or not the missions went to Turkey.

Selection Procedures

According to the program manager, no written procedures exist for selecting mission participants. He stated that he develops a list of individuals from the staffs of congressmen who work on matters related to Turkey and from various House and Senate Committees. He stated that he uses his own judgment in placing persons on the list and selects participants based on their interest and availability. He may or may not know these individuals personally.

Information provided by the Defense Department indicates that a variety of congressional staff have participated in the four study missions. For example, participants included congressional staff from the personal staffs from the offices of representatives and senators and staff from the Senate Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Relations. The program manager said that he tries to select a balanced group comprised of men and women, staff members from the Senate and House of Representatives, and staff members representing both the majority and minority members of the Congress.

Other Matters

Information provided by the Defense Department also indicates that

- the U.S. private sector is not involved with the program;
- Turkish officials have no role in selecting program participants and generally have no contact with them until they arrive in Turkey, where

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- they receive briefings and attend meetings with high-level Turkish officials in the military, Foreign Service, Parliament, and private-sector; and
 - no similar programs exist with other countries.

Scope and Methodology

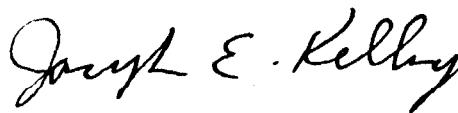
In Washington D.C., we interviewed the Defense Department program official and officials having information related to the program's cost. We obtained and reviewed travel vouchers and supporting documents on the daily expenses and obtained the itineraries for each of the study missions to Turkey. In addition, the Air Force provided us with information on the round-trip flight time between the United States and Turkey and the fiscal year 1988 hourly cost for operating a C-135 aircraft. Also, we obtained information from the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, Turkey, relating to costs associated with the C-12 aircraft used by the study missions for in-country travel. We did not verify the cost data provided by either the Defense Department or the U.S. Embassy.

Our review was conducted between April and August 1990.

As requested, we did not obtain written agency comments on this fact sheet, but we discussed its contents with responsible agency officials, who agreed with the facts presented in the report.

We are sending copies of this fact sheet to the Secretaries of Defense and State; the Director, Office of Management and Budget; and other interested parties.

If I can be of further assistance, please call me on (202) 275-4128. Major contributors to this fact sheet were Charles Schuler, Assistant Director, and Joseph Brown and Ronald Hughes, Senior Evaluators.



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Director, Security and International
Relations Issues

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