



UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

DEFENSE DIVISION

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Dear Mr. Moot:

We have recently completed a study to determine if the Department of Defense is making progress toward the joint production and use of training films by the military services. The Army, Navy, and Air Force spent an estimated \$10.7 million in fiscal year 1971, to produce training films. The cost of a training film in recent years has averaged about \$30,000.

The Office of Audio-Visual Activities, which was recently transferred to your organization, was established in 1967, to coordinate training film requirements of the military services, eliminate duplication, and increase film utilization. Also in 1967, a Joint Interest Working Group consisting of representatives from each of the military services was established to coordinate film requirements, and to improve the use of existing training films.

We believe that these organizations have made progress in encouraging each of the military services to consider the existing training films of the other services before initiating the production of a new film and, to some extent, existing films produced by one military service have been adopted by the other military services. Because there is a reluctance to use a film which depicts military personnel wearing the uniform of a different service or a film setting which is single-service oriented, the practice of using existing films is limited. We feel that this problem could be overcome, and that the military services could realize substantial savings in production costs if they would coordinate their requirements for training films of similar subject matters early in production planning. This would enable them to produce films suitable for use by all three military services.

We identified only one film which had been produced jointly. This film, titled "Parachute--Success or Failure," was funded equally by the Army, Navy, and Air Force. Officials of the three services considered this production a success and are utilizing the film. For the most part, films of interest to all services have been produced independently by each service. For example, the three services have four films on the proper way to brush teeth, six films on saluting, seven on artificial respiration, 16 on physical fitness, 12 on venereal disease, 28 on drug abuse, and 28 on chaplains. Approximately half of these films were produced after coordinating responsibility was assigned to the Office of Audio-Visual Activities in 1967.

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Production of the parachute film demonstrates that joint production of common interest films is feasible. We believe more films could be produced jointly if the military services coordinated their film requirements during the early stages of planning and if the Joint Interest Working Group had the authority to bring about this coordination.

Officials in the office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary (Administration) attributed the limited success in achieving the joint production of training films to lack of early coordination, and they are considering issuing a more explicit directive to the military services aimed at improving coordination.

We suggest that the proposed directive establish specific procedures for assuring production coordination, including a requirement that each service provide information setting out its needs for training films on a prospective basis. This would afford each service the opportunity to consider in advance whether their participation in the development and production of a film would be useful. Also, a listing of subject matters of interest to more than one service could be developed to show which films should be coordinated at the earliest planning stages. We believe that joint production of training films tends to reduce overall film production costs and increase film utilization.

We wish to acknowledge the courtesies and cooperation extended to our representatives during our study. We shall appreciate your comments and advice as to any action taken or planned on the matters discussed in this letter.

Sincerely yours,



R. G. Rothwell
Associate Director

The Honorable Robert C. Moot
The Assistant Secretary of Defense
(Comptroller)