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Instituting Separate Training
Capabilities In The Air Force
Instead Of Continuing To Use Existing
Courses Of Other Military Services

B-175773

UNITED STATES
GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

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MAY 23, 1972



UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

FEDERAL PERSONNEL AND
COMPENSATION DIVISION

C-P. 7

B-175773

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are currently making a survey of selected Air Force policies and practices relating to personnel training. During this survey we have noted certain Air Force actions which we believe are contrary to Department of Defense (DOD) policies on interservice training and which will likely add to the overall training cost for DOD.

Essentially we found that the Air Force had been establishing separate training capabilities instead of continuing to utilize existing training courses of the other military services. For example, the Air Force recently discontinued using nine common skills-training courses offered by other services and established similar courses (see app. I) even though, for the six courses we reviewed, the Air Force considered the training provided by the other services to be adequate.

We plan to continue our review of interservice training. We are calling this matter to your attention at this time, however, because of current plans of the Air Force to establish additional training courses that may duplicate training now provided to the Air Force on an interservice basis. (See apps. II and III.)

Our findings were discussed with Air Force Air Training Command (ATC) officials on March 6, 1972, at the conclusion of this phase of our survey, and their comments were considered in the information presented below. 1778

BACKGROUND

DOD policy on interservice training is set forth in Joint Chiefs of Staff Memorandum 148, dated January 24, 1964, and in joint Army, Navy, and Air Force Regulation AR 351-9/OPNAV Inst. 1500.27/AFR 50-18, dated March 3, 1969. These directives provide that (1) the training facilities of a military service be utilized to the maximum extent in meeting the requirements of the other military services and (2) duplication be eliminated or avoided when practicable and when economically and efficiently warranted.

Correspondence between Headquarters, U.S. Air Force, and Headquarters, ATC, that we examined indicated that Air Force officials had expressed concern, as early as October 1970, over the proportionately greater use of Army and Navy technical training courses by the Air Force compared with the use of Air Force courses by the Army and Navy. ATC subsequently reviewed Air Force participation in all (about 200) Army and Navy technical training courses. The stated purpose of the review was to determine the feasibility of establishing a training capability for these courses within ATC. As of March 6, 1972, ATC had approved new training courses for 17 former interservice courses and three other courses were under study.

We reviewed the justifications for, and related documentation on, the following courses which ATC recently established: (1) heating specialist, (2) central heating plant specialist, (3) carpentry and masonry, (4) construction equipment operator, (5) digital subscriber terminal equipment maintenance, and (6) automatic multiple address segregating system maintenance. The training of Air Force personnel in four of these skills formerly was provided by the Navy at Port Hueneme, California. Army courses at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, and Fort Gordon, Georgia, formerly were used for the other two skills. ATC established its replacements for these courses at its Technical Training Centers at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, and Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi.

COST IMPACT OF AIR FORCE ACTIONS

In June 1971 ATC estimated that one-time costs of about \$708,000 would be incurred by the Air Force for the six courses but that DOD would realize annual recurring savings of about \$239,000 after the first year. We found, however, that ATC's estimate did not include actual or projected costs for certain facilities, equipment, and personnel. By analyzing cost data available to ATC, we estimated that the Air Force's one-time costs could be nearly \$2 million. Our analysis also indicated that annual recurring costs to DOD would be at least \$23,000, rather than annual savings of \$239,000.

One-time costs

ATC's estimate of one-time costs of \$708,000 did not include the following facilities and equipment costs totaling about \$1.2 million.

1. Estimated costs of \$878,000 applicable to space allocated to the two heating courses and to the carpentry and masonry courses in a new base maintenance training facility planned for construction in two phases in fiscal years 1972 and 1973.
2. Estimated costs of \$157,000 applicable to space allocated to the construction equipment operator course in a new vehicle maintenance facility proposed for fiscal year 1974.
3. Costs of \$9,000 applicable to modifications of an existing facility to accommodate the carpentry courses. The amount included for this work in ATC's estimate was \$15,000; at that time a contract for \$24,000 already had been awarded for this work.
4. Projected equipment expenditures of about \$100,000 for the construction equipment operator course and about \$26,000 for the carpentry and masonry courses. The training plan for the construction equipment operator course indicated that equipment and related support items costing \$688,000 would be required for this course, but ATC's estimate included only \$588,000 for equipment. Training plans for the carpentry and masonry courses indicated that \$34,000 would be required for equipment, whereas ATC recognized only \$8,000 in its estimate.

ATC comments

ATC officials advised us that they had not included in their estimate the cost of space allocated to the above courses in the planned facilities because of the general uncertainty of obtaining approval and funding for major construction projects. We believe, however, that the facilities cost applicable to these courses should have been included in ATC's estimate, since the requirement had been recognized and was being used as part of the justification for the proposed new facilities.

Regarding the equipment for the construction equipment operator course, ATC officials advised us that they had reduced the estimate of \$688,000 shown in the training plan to \$588,000 because they believed that the training-plan estimate was too high. We noted, however, that, as of December 10, 1971, equipment valued at about \$693,000 had been acquired for this course.

ATC officials advised us that the \$26,000 for equipment omitted for the carpentry and masonry courses was due to an oversight and agreed that the equipment costs for this course should have been stated as \$34,000 in their estimate.

Recurring costs

Since the actual recurring costs to DOD for the training--before and after ATC established the six courses--had not been identified, we limited our review to an analysis of ATC's estimated savings. Our analysis indicated that the annual recurring cost to DOD would be at least \$23,000 instead of annual savings of \$239,000. The principal reasons for these cost differences are as follows:

1. ATC estimated that 11 additional instructors would be required for the six courses, which would result in increased personnel costs of about \$94,000. At the time the estimate was made, however, it was known that 20 additional instructors would be required. We estimated that the 20 additional instructors would increase personnel costs about \$177,000 annually, or \$83,000 more than ATC had estimated.
2. ATC estimated that the Army and Navy would save a total of about \$139,000 because they would need fewer instructors if they did not train Air Force personnel. Army and Navy officials informed us, however, that no reductions had been made in the number of instructors in their courses.
3. ATC's estimate included a savings of about \$113,000 in student pay resulting from reductions in training time under the Air Force courses. This savings included \$35,000 for two heating courses at Port Hueneme. Since ATC already had management responsibility and control over these two courses under an existing interservice agreement with the Navy, this savings was not contingent upon the Air Force's establishing separate training courses at Sheppard Air Force Base. We believe that a substantial portion of the remaining savings resulting from reductions in course lengths could have been realized by discussing and working out differences with the service responsible for the training and by tailoring the courses to satisfy specific needs of the Air Force.

ATC comments

ATC officials advised us that the estimate of 11 additional instructors was the requirement during the phasein period in which each course was started in ATC. During the phasein period fewer students were taught because the curtailment of interservice training was not offset immediately by the training established at Sheppard. Also during this period some Air Force students still attended the interservice courses. On the basis of the planned student loads after the phasein period, 20 additional instructors would be required.

ATC officials also stated that the cost of additional instructors would be offset by a savings of approximately \$93,000 not included in their June 1971 cost estimate. They attributed this savings to the elimination of the Air Force support squadron at Port Hueneme. We noted, however, that, in computing this savings, ATC had not taken into account any added indirect personnel support costs at Sheppard. Although this indirect support formerly provided at Port Hueneme might have been provided more efficiently at Sheppard, some additional support would have been required at Sheppard. Since indirect support costs are computed basewide and are influenced by many frequently changing factors, we could not determine the associated indirect personnel support costs at Sheppard. We noted, however, that ATC had developed cost factors for allocating indirect support costs at Sheppard. On the basis of these cost factors, the indirect personnel support costs would be \$172,000 for the student load of the five courses established at Sheppard.

TRAINING DEFICIENCIES CITED BY ATC

Deficiencies in the Navy's construction equipment operator course and in its carpentry and masonry course also were cited by ATC as a reason for establishing similar courses in the Air Force. ATC evaluation reports on the carpentry and masonry course indicated that most of the Air Force students attending this course became carpentry specialists and therefore were receiving unnecessary training in masonry tasks. ATC evaluation reports on the Navy's construction equipment operator course pointed out that students did not receive training on certain items of equipment, such as graders and cranes. In its evaluation reports, however, ATC concluded that the training provided by the Navy in both of these courses was adequate.

Other than identifying brief, informal discussions with the Navy, there is no evidence of any attempt by ATC to work out the cited deficiencies in these courses. Possible alternatives to establishing separate courses for Air Force personnel were not considered seriously.

ATC comments

ATC officials advised us that, on the basis of experience with interservice courses, they did not believe that they could obtain the desired course changes and therefore concluded that the only alternative was to establish separate courses in ATC.

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We found that, in addition to establishing the six courses included in our survey, ATC had established another three (for a total of nine), had approved eight (see app. II), and was considering three more new training courses (see app. III) to replace other interservice courses. A cursory review indicated that many of these courses were for common skills. For example, included in this group are such courses as (1) legal specialist, (2) stenographic specialist, and (3) cook.

Since we plan to continue our review of the management of interservice training, we are making no other recommendations than the one applicable to the courses not yet established. In view of DOD's stated policy of making maximum use of interservice training and in view of the increased costs indicated for the six courses that we reviewed, we recommend that you direct the Air Force to advise you, on a priority basis, of the specifics and rationale for establishing the courses listed in appendixes II and III. We believe that the costs versus the benefits for DOD as a whole should be weighed fully before the new training courses are established in the Air Force since they duplicate training already available from other services.

Copies of this letter are being sent to the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force; the Director, Office of

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Management and Budget; and the House and Senate Committees
on Appropriations, Armed Services, and Government Operations.

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Sincerely yours,

(signed) Thomas D. Morris

Acting Director,
Federal Personnel and
Compensation Division

The Honorable
The Secretary of Defense

AIR FORCE TRAINING COURSES
ESTABLISHED BY ATC
TO REPLACE INTERSERVICE COURSES

<u>Course</u>	<u>Course number</u>	<u>Service</u>
1. Heating specialist	5ABN54730	Navy
2. Central heating plant specialist	5ABN54750A	Navy
3. Carpentry and masonry	5ABN55230/55233	Navy
4. Construction equipment operator	5ABN55131	Navy
5. Digital subscriber terminal equipment maintenance	5ALA30630	Army
6. Automatic multiple address segregating system maintenance	5ASA36350-5	Army
7. Digital subscriber terminal operator	5AZA29150	Army
8. Disease vector and pest control	5AZN56630-1 5AZN56630-2	Navy
9. Legal specialist	5ALN70530-1	Navy

INTERSERVICE COURSES APPROVED BY ATC
 BUT NOT YET ESTABLISHED AS
 SEPARATE AIR FORCE TRAINING COURSES

<u>Course</u>	<u>Course number</u>	<u>Ser- vice</u>	<u>Date training scheduled to start</u>
1. Stenographic specialist	5ALA70430	Army	May 17, 1972
2. Cook	5ABA62230	Army	Fiscal year 1973 (first quarter)
3. Open mess management (officer)	5OBA0411	Army	August 1972
4. Open mess management (enlisted)	5AAA74270	Army	August 1972
5. Missile electronic equipment specialist, BQM-34F	5ASN31672	Navy	-
6. Instrumentation technician, BQM-34F	5ASN31770	Navy	-
7. Missile systems analyst, BQM-34F	5ASN31670P	Navy	-
8. Guidance controller, BQM-34F	5ASN31671P-2	Navy	-

INTERSERVICE COURSES BEING CONSIDERED BY ATC FOR
ESTABLISHMENT OF SEPARATE AIR FORCE TRAINING COURSES

<u>Course</u>	<u>Course number</u>	<u>Service</u>
1. Food service supervisor	50BA6241	Army
2. Base maintenance equipment repairman	5ABA47230	Army
3. Personnel services officer	50BA7341	Army

