

July 2005

SOUTHEAST ASIA

Better Human Rights Reviews and Strategic Planning Needed for U.S. Assistance to Foreign Security Forces



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Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-05-793](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

The executive branch has bolstered assistance to the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand to contribute to U.S. foreign policy and security goals. To further human rights goals, Congress restricts certain security assistance funds from being provided to any units of foreign security forces when credible evidence exists that units have committed gross violations of human rights. GAO (1) describes the nature and extent of U.S. assistance to foreign security forces in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand, (2) assesses the controls used to achieve compliance with human rights restrictions on U.S. funding to foreign security forces in these countries, and (3) assesses the U.S. government's national security assistance strategy.

What GAO Recommends

The Secretary of State should (1) strengthen management controls for vetting foreign security forces by clarifying existing guidance to posts and (2) develop and periodically report to Congress an integrated strategic plan for all U.S. government assistance that provides training and equipment for foreign security forces. State commented that its briefing to Congressional staff fully satisfied legislative objectives. While an oral briefing is a good first step, a written plan is needed for wider distribution and tracking progress.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-05-793.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Joseph Christoff at (202) 512-8979 or christoffj@gao.gov.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

Better Human Rights Reviews and Strategic Planning Needed for Assistance to Foreign Security Forces

What GAO Found

The United States allocated about \$265.7 million in assistance from fiscal years 2001 to 2004 to equip and train security forces in the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia.

U.S. law restricts the provision of funds to units of foreign security forces when the Department of State has credible evidence that the unit has committed gross violations of human rights. Agency guidance extends these restrictions to individuals of foreign security forces and requires posts to establish procedures to vet candidates for U.S. sponsored training for possible violations. However, we found no evidence that U.S. officials vetted an estimated 6,900 foreign security trainees—about 4,000 Indonesian, 1,200 Filipino, and 1,700 Thai police—trained by Justice with State law enforcement assistance between fiscal years 2001 through 2004. These candidates included a total of 32 Indonesian individuals trained over time from a notorious special-forces police unit previously prohibited under State policy from receiving U.S. training funds because of the unit's prior human rights abuses. We found better evidence of vetting in training programs managed by DOD. State issued new guidance in February 2005 intended to improve the human rights vetting process and establish a database of human rights abuse allegations.

Foreign Police in U.S. Law Enforcement Training



Source: GAO.

State has not produced a clear and coherent national security assistance strategy that meets objectives that Congress urged State to address in 2000 legislation. As a result, State and Congress may be deprived of the information needed to make future decisions about these programs. State's 2003 strategy met only two of nine objectives in the law. Among other shortfalls, the strategy did not identify how programs would be combined at the country level to achieve objectives or be coordinated with other U.S. government agencies. Several State and DOD planning documents, while not collectively providing a complete national security assistance strategy, address some of the legislation's objectives.

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Abbreviations

ATA	Antiterrorism Assistance
CTFP	Regional Defense Counterterrorism Fellowship Program
DEA	Drug Enforcement Administration
DOD	Department of Defense
DSCA	Defense Security Cooperation Agency
E-IMET	Expanded-IMET
EDA	Excess Defense Articles
ESF	Economic Support Fund
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FMF	Foreign Military Financing
ICITAP	International Criminal Investigative Training and Assistance Program
IMET	International Military Education and Training
INCLE	International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement
JCET	Joint Combined Exchange Training
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
PACOM	U. S. Pacific Command
PKO	Peacekeeping Operations

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United States Government Accountability Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

July 29, 2005

Congressional Committees

The executive branch has considered Southeast Asia as the “second front” in the war on terrorism and has thus bolstered security assistance¹ to Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand to help deal with this threat. This assistance contributes to several U.S. foreign policy and security goals, such as supporting the global war on terror, promoting stronger bilateral relationships, strengthening self-defense capabilities, and promoting greater respect for democracy and human rights. However, to further human rights goals, Congress restricts certain security assistance funds from being provided to any units of foreign security forces when credible evidence exists that units have committed gross violations of human rights.²

To address congressional concerns about the coordination, planning, and impact of security assistance programs, Congress passed the Security Assistance Act of 2000.³ The Act encourages the Department of State (State), in consultation with other agencies, to establish an annual multiyear plan identifying overarching security assistance objectives, the way programs will be combined at the country level to achieve objectives, and the coordination of security assistance programs with other U.S. government agencies.

This report, completed under the Comptroller General’s Authority is being addressed to you because of your committee’s interest and jurisdiction. The report (1) describes the nature and extent of U.S. assistance to foreign security forces in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand; (2) assesses the

¹For the purposes of this report, we defined security assistance as U.S. government assistance aimed at training or equipping foreign security forces (military and police).

²This restriction, commonly referred to as the “Leahy amendment,” first appeared in the 1997 Foreign Operations Export Financing and Related Appropriations Act (P.L. 104-208) and only applied to funds appropriated to State’s International Narcotics Control program. It was broadened in fiscal year 1998 to apply to all funds appropriated under the 1998 Foreign Operations Export Financing and Related Appropriations Act (P.L. 105-118). In fiscal year 1999, a similar provision appeared in the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1999 (P.L. 105-262), which applied to funds appropriated under the act. The two provisions have appeared each year since in the annual Foreign Operations Appropriations Acts and the Department of Defense Appropriations Acts, respectively.

³See P.L. 106-280, 22 §USC 2305.

management controls used to achieve U.S. agency compliance with the human rights restrictions on funding provided to foreign security forces in the three countries; and (3) assesses the U.S. government's national security assistance strategy.

To address these objectives, we reviewed pertinent State, Defense, and Justice planning, funding, and evaluation documents, and related policies and procedures. We focused on State, DOD, and Justice programs or activities providing assistance to foreign security forces in the absence of an agreed-upon definition of security assistance within the U.S. government. We also interviewed senior program officials from the Departments of Defense (DOD), State, and Justice in Washington, D.C.; Manila, the Philippines; Jakarta, Indonesia; and Bangkok, Thailand. We discussed these programs with officials of foreign governments and nongovernmental organizations. In addition, we interviewed DOD officials at the U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) in Honolulu, Hawaii. We reviewed relevant statutes and implementing guidelines, including the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (P.L. 87-195), as amended, the Arms Export Control Act (P.L. 90-629), as amended, the Security Assistance Act of 2000, the fiscal years 2001 to 2004 Foreign Operations Appropriations Act and the Department of Defense Appropriations Acts, and the DOD Security Assistance Management Manual. To assess how the U.S. government provides funding in compliance with human rights restrictions, we inspected program files maintained at the U.S. embassies in Bangkok, Jakarta, and Manila. We conducted this review from July 2004 to June 2005 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

Results in Brief

The United States allocated⁴ about \$265.7 million in assistance from fiscal years 2001 to 2004 to equip and train security forces in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand through 12 programs and activities managed by the Departments of State, Defense, or Justice. This assistance comprises a mix of appropriated funds used for procuring training and equipment as well as nonappropriated assistance, such as transfers of excess military equipment taken from U.S. stocks. State, DOD, and Justice collectively allocated \$179.6 million (67.6 percent) to the Philippines; \$47.5 million (17.9 percent) to Indonesia; and \$38.6 million (14.5 percent) to Thailand. Among the three agencies, State provided most (80.2 percent) of the

⁴We use this term to describe the broad mix of appropriated and nonappropriated assistance being provided to foreign security forces in these three countries.

assistance in the three countries from fiscal years 2001 to 2004. These countries used U.S. assistance to acquire a variety of equipment, training, and related services. For example, the Philippines acquired C-130 aircraft and UH-1 helicopters to enhance the mobility of its armed forces, and also used some U.S. assistance to support its defense reform program; Thailand acquired UH-1s to enhance its ability to combat terrorism; and Indonesia trained its security forces in civil-military relations, civilian police authority, and human rights issues.

Weak management controls resulted in lapses in human rights vetting for individual trainees at the three posts we visited and within headquarters units. Recent foreign operations and DOD annual appropriations acts restrict the provision of funds provided under the acts to units of foreign security forces when there is “credible evidence” that the unit has committed “gross violations” of human rights. Additionally, State and DOD guidance extends these restrictions to individuals as well as to units of foreign security forces, and requires posts to establish vetting procedures to ensure compliance with these restrictions. However, we found no evidence that the three posts we visited vetted an estimated 6,900 law enforcement officials—approximately 4,000 Indonesian, 1,200 Filipino, and 1,700 Thai officials—trained as individuals with State’s law enforcement assistance between fiscal years 2001 through 2004.⁵ The trainees included 32 Indonesian individuals trained over time from a notorious special-forces police unit that was previously prohibited from receiving U.S. training funds under State policy because of the unit’s prior human rights abuses. We found better evidence of vetting in other training programs managed by DOD. For example, in the Philippines, we randomly sampled 107 DOD trainee files and estimated that 87 percent of the trainee files would contain some evidence of vetting, while 13 percent would contain no evidence of vetting. We also found evidence of vetting for all 35 DOD trainee files that we randomly sampled in the other two countries, although these results are not projectable. Vetting did not occur because of weaknesses in some agencies’ management controls. First, State and Justice headquarters units did not assign clear roles and responsibilities for human rights vetting, nor did they clearly communicate these responsibilities in writing to all employees, particularly law enforcement officials. Second, two of the three posts did not establish written policies and procedures covering all the agency representatives involved in the vetting process prior to 2004, nor

⁵An estimated 9,470 foreign security officials were trained under State and DOD programs during this period.

did they specify the documentation and records retention requirements for these entities. Third, neither State headquarters nor the three posts established systems to monitor compliance with vetting requirements. State issued new guidance in February 2005 intended to improve the efficiency of the human rights vetting process. State announced that it had established a new human rights database to be a clearinghouse of information of alleged human rights abuses.

In examining the U.S. government's assistance to foreign security forces in these countries, we found that State has not produced a coherent national security assistance strategy that meets the objectives that Congress encouraged State to include in this strategy. The national security assistance strategy that State issued in 2003 addressed only two of the nine objectives included in the Security Assistance Act of 2000. Among other shortfalls, the plan does not identify the allocation of resources to accomplish objectives, the ways in which programs would be combined at the country level to achieve objectives, or the coordination of these programs with other U.S. government agencies. State and DOD annually develop various country, regional, and national strategy and planning documents that address many of the Acts' objectives; these could be used as the basis for developing an annual national security assistance strategy. As a result of these strategic planning weaknesses, it may be difficult for State and Congress to assess the contribution the U.S. assistance makes to broader U.S. foreign policy objectives, such as stemming terrorism, promoting regional stability, and demonstrating respect for human rights. In addition, the lack of a clear and coherent strategy may inhibit Congress' ability to effectively allocate resources and deprive it of the information it needs for future decisionmaking on these programs.

We are recommending that the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and the Attorney General, strengthen management controls on vetting security forces by issuing consolidated written guidance to posts and headquarters offices. This guidance should assign clear roles and responsibilities for post and headquarters offices and establish monitoring systems to verify that required procedures are being carried out. We also are recommending that the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense and the Attorney General, jointly develop an integrated strategic plan for all U.S. government assistance programs that provide training and equipment for foreign security forces (military and police).

We provided a draft of this report to the Secretaries of Defense and State, and to the Attorney General for their review and comment. We received written responses from the Secretaries of Defense and State. The Secretary of Defense concurred with the report's findings in principle. Neither the Secretaries of Defense nor State commented on the recommendations. The Secretaries of Defense and State, and the Attorney General also provided us technical comments, which we incorporated as appropriate.

The Secretary of State acknowledged the need for continued improvement on human rights vetting procedures but stated that it is operating its assistance programs in full compliance with the law. State commented that any vetting of individuals is done as a matter of State policy and practice, not as a matter of law. We agree with State's comment. However, in reviewing State's application of its policy on human rights vetting of individuals, we found significant weaknesses that resulted in an estimated 6,900 individuals receiving U.S. training assistance without any evidence that they had first been vetted for gross violations of human rights. Therefore, we recommended in our report that State strengthen management controls on vetting to meet its stated policy goal of not providing U.S. assistance to suspected gross human rights violators.

State also asserted that it has fully complied with congressional intent regarding a national security assistance strategy. State disagreed with our finding that the national security assistance strategy met only two of nine objectives of the law. It stated that our findings are based on incomplete information because many of the objectives were met and discussed in a May 2003 oral briefing to selected congressional committee staff. State also commented that its briefing to congressional committees fully satisfied the committees represented at the time, and that the absence of further requests for a briefing relieved it of further reporting responsibilities. We disagree with State's comments. The briefing was a good first step, but a detailed written plan is needed for wider distribution, and for providing documentation for tracking progress in moving forward.

Background

As a foreign policy tool, the U.S. government provides assistance to security forces (military and police) in more than 150 countries around the world, including Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand. State provides assistance to foreign security forces through at least six programs and activities. Appendix II provides additional details on these programs.

-
- Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) is used to train foreign security forces in anti-terrorism and terrorism response tactics.
 - Economic Support Fund (ESF) is used primarily for economic assistance to promote political or economic stability; however, some ESF is allocated for training foreign security forces.
 - Foreign Military Financing (FMF) is used to provide grants and loans for the acquisition of U.S. defense equipment, services, and training by foreign governments. This assistance is aimed at improving defense capabilities and fostering stronger military relationships between the United States and recipient nations.
 - International Military Education and Training (IMET) is used to train and educate foreign military forces and related civilian personnel. Expanded-IMET (E-IMET), a variant of the regular IMET program, focuses on democracy, the rule of law, and human rights training and education.
 - International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE) is used primarily to support counter-narcotics, intelligence, border patrol, and interdiction activities.
 - Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) supports multilateral peacekeeping and regional stability operations that are not funded through the United Nations.

DOD provides a mix of appropriated and nonappropriated assistance to foreign security forces through at least four programs or activities. Appendix III provides additional details on these programs.

- Excess Defense Articles (EDA) are nonappropriated assistance in the form of excess U.S. defense articles drawn from DOD stocks. The President is authorized to transfer, with limitations, defense articles declared as excess by the military departments to foreign governments in support of U.S. national security and foreign policy objectives.
- Drawdown is nonappropriated assistance that the President is authorized to draw down from the stocks of any U.S. government agency for emergencies, disasters, counternarcotics, refugee assistance, peacekeeping, anti-terrorist activities, and nonproliferation.

-
- Regional Defense Counterterrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP) is a DOD program used to provide funding to foreign military and related civilian officials to attend U.S. military education institutions and selected regional centers for nonlethal training.
 - Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) permits U.S. special operations forces to train with foreign military forces, provided that the training primarily benefits U.S. forces. The host nation's security forces also derive a benefit.

The Department of Justice provides assistance to foreign security forces through at least two Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) training activities in foreign countries. DEA trains law enforcement officials and police to carry out special counter-narcotics operations. The FBI also trains law enforcement officials and police in these countries.

Following the September 11 terrorist attacks, the Philippines and Indonesia became central to the U.S. government's antiterrorism efforts in Southeast Asia due to their strategic importance, Muslim populations, and insurgency movements that use terrorist tactics. The U.S. government has been concerned with radical Islamist groups in Southeast Asia, particularly those in Indonesia, the Philippines, and other countries that are known to have ties to the Al Qaeda terrorist network. For more than a decade, Al Qaeda has penetrated the region by establishing local cells, training Southeast Asians in its camps in Afghanistan, and by financing and cooperating with indigenous radical Islamist groups. According to the Congressional Research Service,⁶ Indonesia and the southern Philippines have been particularly vulnerable to anti-American Islamic terrorist groups. A spate of violence in Thailand's Muslim provinces in early 2004 intensified the focus on Islamic extremism in southern Thailand. The violence has forced Thai authorities to publicly re-evaluate the threat of a Muslim separatist insurgency with financial and operational ties to international Islamic terrorist groups.

⁶Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, *CRS Report for Congress, Terrorism in Southeast Asia*, RL31672 (Washington, D.C.: May 5, 2004).

According to the State Department's 2004 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, the three countries we reviewed face several human rights challenges.⁷

- **The Philippines.** According to State's human rights report for the Philippines, the government generally respected the human rights of its citizens. However, some elements of the country's security forces were responsible for arbitrary, unlawful and, in some cases, extrajudicial killings, disappearances, and torture, and arbitrary arrest and detention.
- **Indonesia.** State's human rights report for Indonesia stated that the Indonesian government made progress in its transition from three decades of repressive and authoritarian rule to a more pluralistic and representative democracy. The government's human rights record remained poor, however, and it continued to commit serious abuses. For example, the report stated that "[S]ecurity force members murdered, tortured, raped, beat, and arbitrarily detained civilians and members of separatist movements, especially in Aceh and to a lesser extent in Papua. Some police officers occasionally used excessive and sometimes deadly force in arresting suspects and in attempting to obtain information or a confession. Retired and active duty military officers known to have committed serious human rights violations occupied or were promoted to senior positions in the Government and the (military)."
- **Thailand.** According to State's human rights report, the government of Thailand generally respected the rights of its citizens, but there were significant problems in some areas. For example, separatist violence in southern Thailand resulted in the deaths of more than 180 persons at the hands of security forces. In addition, no progress was reported in investigations into the extrajudicial killings of approximately 1,300 suspected drug traffickers during the Thai government's 3-month "War on Drugs" campaign from February through April 2003. However, the Thai government maintains that the deaths were the result of disputes between those involved in the drug trade.

⁷For Indonesia, see <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2004/41643.htm>. For the Philippines, see <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2004/41657.htm>. For Thailand, see <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2004/41661.htm>.

Assistance to Train and Equip Security Forces in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand Provided through Three Agencies under at Least 12 Programs

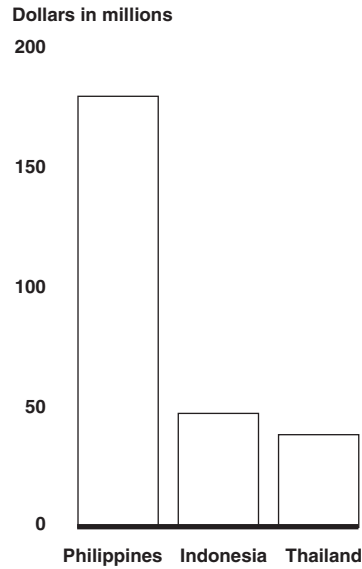
U.S. assistance to security forces in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand was provided through at least 12 programs and activities managed by State, DOD, and Justice. This assistance comprises a mix of appropriated funds used for procuring training and equipment, as well as nonappropriated assistance such as transfers of excess military equipment taken from U.S. stocks. The Philippines was the largest beneficiary of this assistance from fiscal years 2001 to 2004. U.S. assistance to security forces in the Philippines largely supported the Philippines Defense Reform—a comprehensive defense assessment to develop a multi-year defense strategy, enhance mobility, and build defense capacity. Restrictions on Indonesia prohibited it from receiving military equipment; however, Indonesia received funding to train its security forces. U.S. assistance to Thailand is used for procuring equipment and training for such activities as counter narcotics and antiterrorism.

State, DOD, and Justice Provide Assistance to Security Forces in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand

State, DOD, and Justice allocated⁸ a total of approximately \$265.7 million to train and equip security forces in the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia in fiscal years 2001 to 2004. This amounted to \$179.6 million for the Philippines, \$47.5 million for Indonesia, and \$38.6 million for Thailand. Figure 1 shows a comparison of U.S. assistance for each of the three countries and illustrates that the United States provided the Philippines with significantly more assistance than Indonesia and Thailand.

⁸We use the term “allocations” to describe the broad mix of appropriated and nonappropriated assistance being provided to foreign security forces in these three countries. State and DOD appropriations accounted for 83.8 percent of the total; nonappropriated assistance in the form of Excess Defense Articles and drawdowns from DOD stocks accounted for 13.4 percent of the total; and DOD and Justice expenditures accounted for 3.9 percent of the total. Expenditures data were used for DOD’s JCET program and Justice’s DEA and FBI training activities because separate appropriations and country allocation data do not exist.

Figure 1: U.S. Allocations to Train and Equip Security Forces in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand, Fiscal Years 2001- 2004

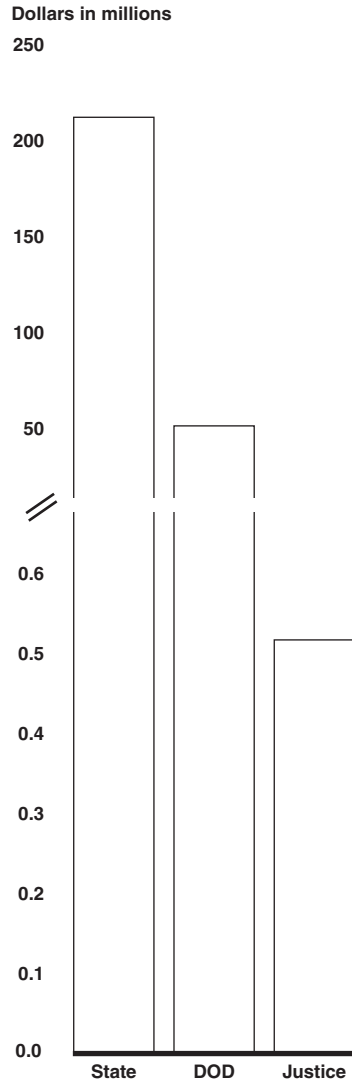


Source: GAO analysis of agency data.

Note: See footnote 8.

State allocated most of the assistance, \$212.9 million (80.2 percent), while DOD allocated \$52.2 million (19.6 percent), and Justice allocated \$518,000 (less than 1 percent). Figure 2 shows a comparison of assistance by agency, illustrating that State allocated most of the assistance to train and equip security forces in the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia.

Figure 2: State, DOD, and Justice Allocations to Security Forces in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand, Fiscal Years 2001- 2004



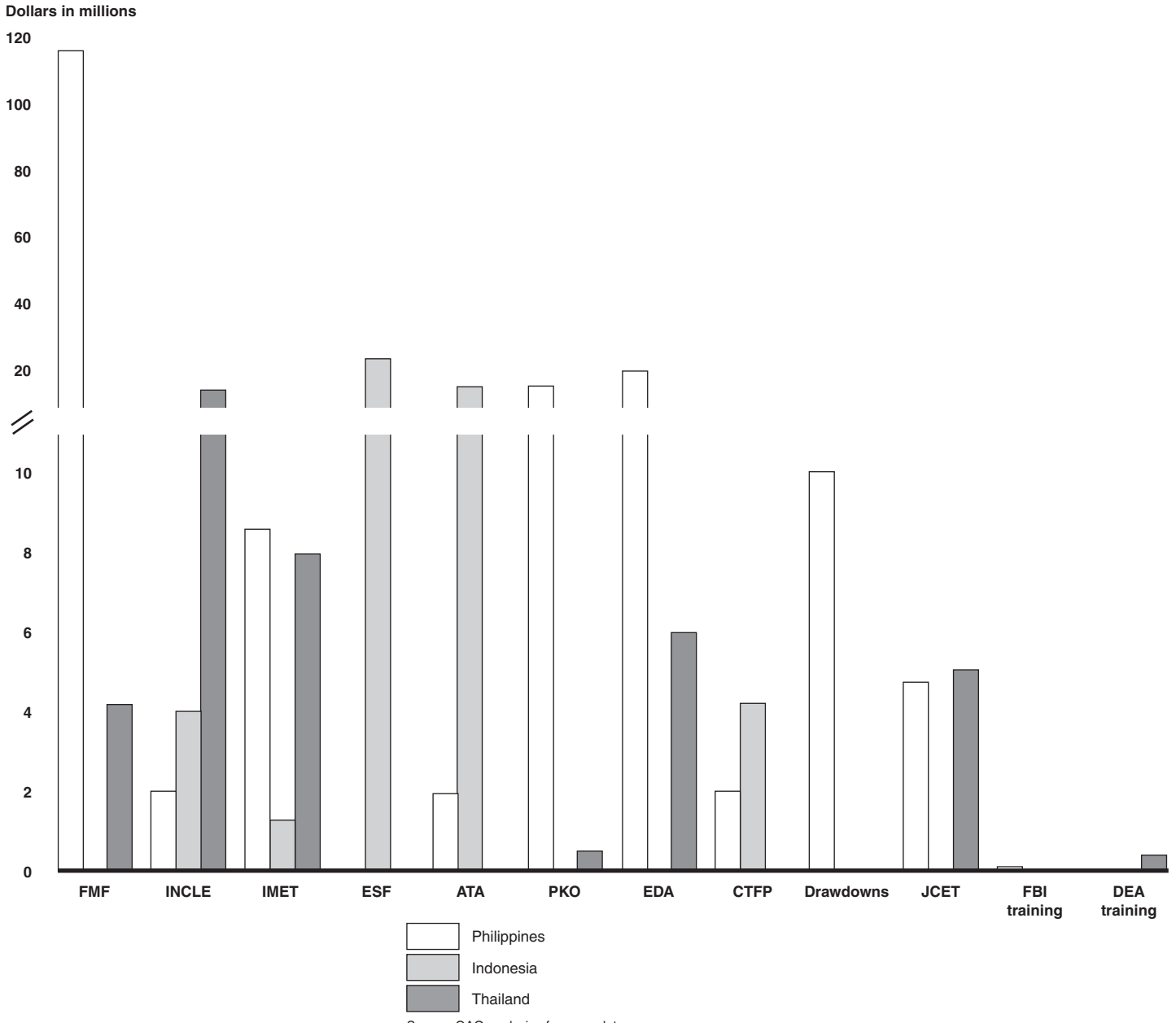
Source: GAO analysis of agency data.

Note: See footnote 8.

This assistance was provided through at least 12 programs and was used for procuring a variety of equipment, training, and services within each country. Figure 3 shows a comparison of U.S. assistance by program for

each of the three countries. The FMF allocation for the Philippines represented the largest single program across all three countries.

Figure 3: U.S. Allocations to Security Forces by Program, Fiscal Years 2001- 2004



Note: See footnote 8.

Assistance to the Philippines
Helped Support Defense Reform

State, DOD, and Justice assistance to train and equip security forces in the Philippines in fiscal years 2001 to 2004 totaled about \$179.6 million and helped support the Philippines Defense Reform-- a comprehensive defense assessment to develop a multi-year defense strategy, enhance mobility, and build defense capacity. Table 1 shows the U.S. agency, program or activity, allocations, and some examples of how the assistance was used.

Table 1: U.S. Allocations to Security Forces in the Philippines, Fiscal Years 2001-2004

Dollars in millions

Agency	Program/activity	Allocations	Examples of how assistance was used
State	FMF	\$115.8	Maintenance support for C-130s, UH-1s, fast patrol craft, M-35 trucks; counterterrorism training for maritime, ground, and air forces; support for Philippine Defense Reform in fiscal year 2004.
	PKO	\$15.0	Refurbish UH-1 helicopters, procure spare parts for UH-1s and combat engineering spares and support.
	IMET	\$8.6	Train in amphibious warfare, combat strategies and intelligence, security assistance management, defense resources management, and logistics held at U.S. military bases and other institutions, such as the U.S. Army War College.
	INCLE	\$2.0	Support training to develop an effective civilian police force in the autonomous Muslim Region of Mindanao. Some INCLE funding was used for an FBI assessment of the Philippines fingerprint and processing system as part of a worldwide effort to develop an international terrorist database.
	ATA	\$1.9	Train in terrorist crime scene investigation, hostage negotiation, and mass casualty medical issues.
DOD	EDA	\$19.5	Provide cargo trucks and UH-1H helicopters, armored personnel carriers, rifles, and magazine cartridges--to be drawn from DOD stocks.
	Drawdown	\$10.0	Provide defense articles and services from U.S. Navy stocks for delivery to the Philippines Ministry of Defense.

(Continued From Previous Page)

Dollars in millions

Agency	Program/activity	Allocations	Examples of how assistance was used
	JCET	\$4.7	Provide joint training for U.S. Special Operations Forces and the Philippines' security forces.
	CTFP	\$2.0	Provide courses in combating terrorism and preparedness and consequence management to train military forces in counterterrorism techniques and to work with other relevant agencies.
Justice	DEA & FBI	\$0.1	Train law enforcement and police in counter narcotics, money laundering, and other criminal activities and assets forfeiture techniques.
Total		\$179.7^a	

Source: GAO analysis of State, DOD, and Justice data.

^aTotal may not correspond to the sum of the column due to rounding.

Note: See footnote 8.

Assistance to Indonesia Supported Training for Police Forces

State, DOD, and Justice allocated a total of about \$47.5 million in assistance to train Indonesian security forces in fiscal years 2001 to 2004; however, various congressional funding restrictions limited Indonesia's eligibility for U.S. military assistance and training over this period. State provided \$43.3 million (91 percent of the country total), including \$23.2 million (49 percent) of the country total in police training through the Economic Support Fund. DOD provided military training through its Regional Defense Counterterrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP). Indonesia is the single largest recipient of this assistance worldwide. Table 2 shows the U.S. agency, program or activity, allocations, and some examples of how the assistance was used.

Table 2: U.S. Allocations to Security Forces in Indonesia, Fiscal Years 2001-2004

Dollars in millions

Agency	Program/activity	Allocations	Examples of how assistance was used
State	ESF	\$23.2	Train Indonesia's police forces in management initiatives, administrative justice and maritime enforcement, seaport and waterway security, human rights issues and the rule of law, anticorruption, and in reconstituting civilian police authority.
	ATA	\$14.8	Support counterterrorism training facilities in Megamendung; conduct training courses in crisis response and explosive incidents countermeasures; and support the formation of the National-Level Counterterrorism Task Force known as "Task Force 88."
	INCLE	\$4.0	Assist with the transition of the Indonesia police to a civilian-led police force since the separation of the police forces from the national military, including technical assistance and human rights training.
	Expanded-IMET	\$1.3	Train in civil-military relations, resources management, and international defense management to Indonesia's military forces (variant of the regular IMET program).
DOD	CTFP	\$4.2	Train to educate military forces about combating terrorism, the laws of war, resource management and budgeting, international defense management, and preparedness and consequence management.
Total		\$47.5	

Source: GAO analysis of State, DOD, and Justice data.

Note: See footnote 8.

Assistance to Thailand Largely Supported Law Enforcement and Military Training

State, DOD, and Justice allocated a total of about \$38.6 million in assistance for Thai security forces to procure a variety of defense articles, services, and training supporting activities such as counter narcotics, military training, antiterrorism, and force modernization. The largest share of the money was used for training law enforcement officials in counter narcotics operations and for providing the Thai military with advanced training. Table 3 shows the U.S. agency, program or activity, allocations, and some examples of how assistance was used.

Table 3: U.S. Allocations to Security Forces in Thailand, Fiscal Years 2001-2004

Dollars in millions

Agency	Program/activity	Allocations	Examples of how assistance was used
State	INCLE	\$13.8	Supports law enforcement investigations and prosecution of narcotics traffickers as well as efforts to suppress illicit drug trafficking and retail sales.
	IMET	\$7.9	Trains military forces in courses such as advanced supply management, amphibious planning, combat strategies and intelligence training, international defense management, joint combined war fighting, and military police training.
	FMF	\$4.2	Used toward the procurement of military equipment such as communications equipment and small arms.
	PKO	\$0.5	To purchase equipment for Thai military peacekeeping and counterterrorism units.
DOD	EDA	\$6.0	Approved and to be drawn from DOD stocks including Cobra helicopters and utility helicopters.
	JCET	\$5.0	Training for U.S. Special Operations Forces and Thai security forces.
	CTFP	\$0.8	Combating terrorism training courses for Thai military forces.
Justice	DEA and FBI	\$0.4	Training for security forces in counternarcotics and anti-criminal tactics.
Total		\$38.6^a	

Source: GAO analysis of State, DOD, and Justice data.

^aTotal may not correspond to the sum of the column due to rounding.

Note: See footnote 8.

Weak Management Controls on U.S. Assistance to Foreign Security Forces Allowed Violations of State’s Policy on Human Rights Restrictions to Occur

We found no evidence that the three posts we visited vetted an estimated 6,935 law enforcement officials trained with State assistance between fiscal years 2001 and 2004.⁹ The trainees included 32 Indonesian police from a notorious special-forces police unit that was prohibited from receiving U.S. training funds under State policy because of the unit’s prior human rights abuses. We found better evidence¹⁰ of vetting in DOD-implemented training programs. For example, in the Philippines, we randomly sampled 107 DOD trainee files and estimated that 87 percent of the trainee files contained some evidence of vetting, while 13 percent contained no evidence of vetting. We also found evidence of vetting for all 35 DOD trainee files that we randomly sampled in the other two countries, although these results are not projectable. Vetting did not occur because of weaknesses in some agencies’ management controls. First, State and Justice headquarters units did not assign clear roles and responsibilities for vetting foreign security forces, nor did they clearly communicate these responsibilities to all employees involved in the process, especially to law enforcement officials at posts. Second, prior to 2004, two of the three posts did not establish written policies and procedures for all of the offices involved in the vetting process, or specify the documentation and records retention requirements for these units. Third, neither State headquarters nor the three posts established systems to periodically monitor compliance with vetting requirements.

Laws and State Policy Restrict U.S. Assistance to Foreign Security Forces

Each of the annual Foreign Operations Appropriations Acts since 1998 has included a provision, commonly referred to as the “Leahy Amendment,” that restricts the provision of assistance appropriated in these acts to any foreign security unit for which State has determined there is credible

⁹This number includes approximately 4,000 Indonesian, 1,175 Filipino, and 1,760 Thai law enforcement officials out of an estimated 9,470 total foreign security forces at the three posts.

¹⁰For purposes of our review, we said that we found “some evidence” of vetting when we found documents indicating that the political affairs office was involved in the post vetting process.

evidence¹¹ that the unit has committed gross violations of human rights, unless certain conditions have been met.¹² DOD's appropriations acts have contained a similar restriction on DOD-funded training since fiscal year 1999.¹³

To implement these legislative restrictions, in June 1999 and February 2003, State directed all posts involved in providing security assistance to foreign security forces to have procedures in place to ensure compliance with the restrictions. Between 1999 and 2004, DOD and State issued specific instructions to the posts on implementing these restrictions for DOD-managed training programs. While the provisions restrict funding to "any *unit* of the security forces of a foreign country," State policy applies the restrictions to *individual* members of security forces, as well. State and DOD guidance reflects this policy.

¹¹"Credible evidence" was not defined in the appropriations provisions. However, with regard to the meaning of "evidence," State directed the posts to report language accompanying the fiscal year 1999 Foreign Operations Appropriations Act that indicated that the conferees do not intend that the evidence must be admissible in a court of law. As to the definition of "credible," while State retains authority for all final decisions, State directed that posts should apply a rule of reason and that State seeks information deserving of confidence as a basis for decisionmaking.

¹²Specifically, the most recent provision in the Foreign Operations Export Financing and Related Appropriations Act for 2005 (P.L. 108-447, §553) states that: "None of the funds made available by this Act may be provided to any unit of the security forces of a foreign country if the Secretary of State has credible evidence that such unit has committed gross violations of human rights, unless the Secretary determines and reports to the Committees on Appropriations that the government of such country is taking effective measures to bring the responsible members of the security forces unit to justice." The provision has also appeared in prior Foreign Operations Appropriations Acts. See P.L. 105-118, §570 (FY98); P.L. 105-277, §568 (FY99); P.L. 106-113, § 564 (FY2000); P.L. 106-429, §563 (FY2001); P.L. 107-115, §556 (FY2002); P.L. 108-7, § 553 (FY2003); P.L. 108-199, § 553 (FY2004).

¹³The most recent provision in the DOD Appropriations Act for 2005 states that: "None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to support any training program involving a unit of the security forces of a foreign country if the Secretary of Defense has received credible information from the Department of State that the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights, unless all necessary corrective steps have been taken." (P.L. 108-287 §8076) Similar provisions have also appeared in prior DOD appropriations acts. See P.L. 105-262, §8130 (FY1999); P.L. 106-79, §8098 (FY2000); P.L. 106-259, §8092 (FY2001); P.L. 107-117, §8093 (FY2003); P.L. 107-248, §8080 (FY2003); P.L. 108087, §8077 (FY2004).

Vetting candidates for human rights concerns commonly would include the following steps, according to post officials, State headquarters officials, and State guidance.¹⁴ First, the office at the post sponsoring the training reviews biographical and service information provided by the host government to determine if the individual or unit has been involved in gross violations of human rights. Second, the sponsoring office forwards the name to the political affairs office at the post for its independent review. The political affairs office or sponsoring office also circulates the candidate's name to other relevant offices within the post.¹⁵ As part of this second step, the human rights officer or a foreign service national assigned to the political office typically searches newspaper articles or the Internet for evidence of the candidate's involvement in gross violations of human rights. The political office may also consult human rights nongovernmental organizations in-country or national commissions on human rights for any information they have on the candidate. Other offices at the post to whom the candidate's name is sent are expected to review any information they have and report the results of their search to the political office. Finally, the post sends the candidate's name to State headquarters to be distributed to relevant bureaus for final review and approval.

Foreign Security Officials Not Always Vetted for Possible Human Rights Violations

At the three posts we visited, we found lapses in human rights vetting for foreign security forces, particularly in law enforcement training programs. Table 4 shows the estimated number of law enforcement personnel that U.S. officials estimated had received training but for whom no vetting had occurred. U.S. officials based these estimates on the sizes of the groups trained in each country for particular programs.

¹⁴This describes the general process of human rights vetting. There are slight differences in details depending on whether the assistance involves units or individuals and on whether funding is from the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act or DOD Appropriations Act for DOD training.

¹⁵In technical comments on this report, DOD stated that at Embassy Jakarta, the sponsoring office, not the political affairs office, circulates candidate information to other offices at post for their review. However, DOD also offered contradictory information when it stated that there is no difference in the details of the process whether the funding source is Foreign Operations Appropriations Act or DOD Appropriations Act for DOD training. In fact, DOD has additional procedures to cable candidate information for DOD-funded training programs (e.g., JCETS and CTFP) to State headquarters, DOD headquarters, and the Pacific Command.

Table 4: Estimated Number of Foreign Law Enforcement Trainees Not Vetted, Fiscal Years 2001-2004

Country	Estimated number of law enforcement trainees not vetted
Philippines ^a	1,175
Indonesia ^a	4,000
Thailand ^b	1,760
Total	6,935

Source: GAO analysis of agency data.

^aTrainees were trained under Justice’s International Criminal Investigative Training and Assistance program.

^bThis number was derived by adding an estimated 1,439 trainees under State’s Narcotics Affairs Section and about 300 in-country trainees under State’s ATA program.

In addition, table 5 shows the results of a sample of trainee names that we reviewed at each post to identify evidence of human rights vetting.

Table 5: GAO Sample of Trainees for Vetting at Three Posts, Fiscal Years 2001- 2004

Implementing agency/country	Number of trainees identified by post	GAO sample size by program/country	Sample Results	
			Some vetting documented	No vetting documented
DOD				
Philippines ^a	787	107	93	14
Indonesia ^b	353	10	10	0
Thailand ^c	795	25	25	0
State				
Indonesia ^d	297	7	2	5
Thailand ^e	144	15	13	2
Philippines Subtotal	787	107	93	14
Indonesia Subtotal	650	17	12	5
Thailand Subtotal	939	40	38	2
Grand total	2,376	164	143	21

Source: GAO analysis of agency data.

^aWe selected only DOD-managed programs and activities (IMET and FMF) for our sample because the number of law enforcement trainees was not available at the time of our visit to the post.

^bThis number is composed of trainees for CTFP, E-IMET, Asia-Pacific Center, and other miscellaneous DOD-managed programs and activities.

^cThis number is composed of trainees for DOD-managed, IMET, FMS, CTFP, and other miscellaneous programs.

^dThis number is composed of trainees for State's ATA program.

^eTotal number of trainees under State's Thailand ATA program was 708, which included 144 trainees sent to the United States for training. We removed the 243 trainees from the ATA total that were not security forces and thus not subject to human rights vetting. We also removed 321 in-country trainees from the total. These 321 are accounted for in table 4.

The Philippines. We found no evidence that any of the estimated 1,175 Filipino police forces receiving training under Justice's International Criminal Investigative Training and Assistance Program (ICITAP)¹⁶ in fiscal year 2004 were vetted for evidence of gross violations of human rights. A post official said that a foreign service national in his office responsible for ICITAP performed some vetting on these candidates, but could not document the important step of coordinating with the political affairs office as required by State guidance until late 2004. In addition, we reviewed 107 randomly selected trainee files from an estimated total of 787 trainees in the DOD-implemented programs¹⁷ and found some evidence of vetting in most instances (93 files). The remaining 14 files contained no evidence that vetting had occurred.

Indonesia. We found no evidence that an estimated 4,000 Indonesian law enforcement officials who received training under Justice's ICITAP were vetted for possible human rights violations prior to October 2004. These trainees include 32 police from a notorious unit ineligible for such training under the ICITAP, according to State officials. In addition, our review of 10 randomly selected DOD trainee files from an estimated total of 353 trainees showed some evidence of vetting in all instances. Files for DOD-implemented training generally included evidence that the Political Affairs Office was included in the vetting process, indicating a more inclusive and independent post-wide review. Post officials said that they had implemented new post-wide procedures in late 2004 to improve the vetting process, and now vet candidates for all post programs in accordance with earlier State guidance.

¹⁶ICITAP is funded by State's International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement program, but implemented by Justice.

¹⁷These programs all involved training under IMET, FMF, or CTFP.

Thailand. We found no evidence that the approximately 1,760 Thai law enforcement officials who received training under the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act-funded law enforcement training programs were vetted for possible human rights violations. In contrast, our review of 25 randomly selected DOD trainee files from an estimated total of 795 trainees in the DOD-implemented programs¹⁸ showed some evidence of vetting. For example, DOD training files generally included an initialed and dated checklist returned from the Political Affairs Office, indicating the status of the post-wide review.

However, the DOD official in Thailand responsible for IMET training said that his office did not submit names of individuals to receive in-country IMET training to the country team for vetting because officials were not aware of this responsibility. According to 1999 DOD guidelines, all individuals and units scheduled for in-country DOD-implemented training should be vetted. Officials and post estimates indicated that about half of the 795 trainees were trained in-country between fiscal years 2001 and 2004. In technical comments on a draft of this report, DOD stated that the post is now vetting all in-country military training, but provided no evidence to support this.

Agencies Do Not Have Controls in Place to Help Ensure Compliance with Human Rights Funding Restrictions

Lapses in vetting occurred because the agencies did not assign clear roles and responsibilities for vetting foreign officials; departments and posts lacked clear and consistent vetting procedures; and State and posts did not establish a system to monitor compliance with these procedures. GAO's *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government* prescribes basic standards for management controls¹⁹ in the federal government. Internal control is an integral part of an organization's management that provides reasonable assurance that an entity achieves (1) effectiveness and efficiency of operations, (2) reliability of financial reporting, and (3)

¹⁸The programs included FMF, IMET, and CTFP.

¹⁹See GAO, *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government* (GAO/AIMD-00-21.3.1, Nov. 1999).

compliance with applicable laws and regulations.²⁰ As a result, U.S. agencies did not always vet foreign security forces for derogatory human rights information before providing them with U.S.-funded training opportunities.

Vetting Process Lacks Clearly Defined Roles and Responsibilities

Neither State headquarters nor the three posts we visited had clear roles and responsibilities established for vetting foreign security forces receiving State funding from fiscal years 2001 and 2004 or for monitoring posts' or State headquarters' compliance with vetting procedures. As a result, officials at the posts we visited expressed confusion over their vetting roles and responsibilities, especially those related to law enforcement training programs.

According to GAO's internal control standards, an organization should establish a positive control environment, including an organizational structure and clearly defined roles and responsibilities conducive to sound management controls. However, State guidance did not establish a single bureau to be responsible for implementing the vetting process or for monitoring posts' compliance with vetting procedures. This was an important omission because four State bureaus are involved in either establishing policy or managing State-funded training programs: Bureau of Political-Military Affairs; Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement; Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor; and the Bureau of East Asia and Pacific Affairs.

²⁰Under these standards, management control is defined as consisting of five interrelated components: (1) Control environment. Management should establish a supportive environment for internal control and assign authority and responsibility clearly throughout the organization and clearly communicate this to all employees. (2) Risk Assessment. Management needs to formulate an approach for assessing risk and decide upon the internal control activities required to mitigate those risks and achieve efficient and effective operations, reliable financial reporting, and compliance with laws and regulations. (3) Control activities. Policies and procedures are needed to help ensure that management's directives to mitigate risks are carried out. These activities include accurate and timely recording of transactions and events. (4) Information and communication. Relevant and reliable information should be recorded and communicated to management and others within the agency who need it and in a form and within a time frame that enables them to carry out their responsibilities. (5) Monitoring. Internal control monitoring assesses the quality of performance over time and ensures that the findings of audits and other reviews are promptly resolved.

State Lacks Clear Policies and Procedures for Vetting Foreign Security Forces

State lacked clear policies and procedures for human rights vetting in several areas: (1) only the Manila post established postwide procedures, as required, prior to 2004; (2) State established no documentation and record retention requirements regarding vetting documents; (3) the posts did not conduct a comprehensive review of all candidates for assistance through a central focal point, such as the political affairs office, before 2004; (4) State headquarters did not specify whether posts needed to submit candidates' names to State headquarters for additional review and approval. According to GAO's internal control standards, policies and procedures help enforce management directives and are integral to achieving effective results.

State's June 1999 and 2003 guidance directed all posts to establish procedures to implement the human rights restrictions for all Foreign Operations Appropriations Act-funded aid to security forces and DOD-funded training. According to our internal control standards, policies and procedures help enforce management directives and are integral to achieving effective results. However, only Embassy Manila established written procedures for human rights vetting as required prior to 2004. Guidance issued in 1999 directed that posts report their procedures to the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor by a certain date, but a Bureau official believed that posts had not done so. Nonetheless, prior to 2004, two of the three posts did not establish written policies and procedures for the vetting process. Two of the three posts we visited—Manila and Jakarta—established new written procedures for human rights vetting in the fall 2004; the Bangkok post had not yet established written procedures at the time of our visit in March 2005. In contrast, DOD and State issued more detailed supplemental guidance to DOD officials at posts for DOD-funded training, including criteria to apply in screening candidates and checklists to track vetting processes.

State's 1999 and 2003 guidance also did not specify documentation and record retention requirements for the documents used at posts or headquarters in the human rights vetting process for Foreign Operations Appropriations Act-funded assistance. As a result, the Jakarta post was unable to provide us with any documentation of post vetting conducted for ICITAP between fiscal years 2001 and 2004. By contrast, documentation for vetting candidates for DOD-implemented training generally was more complete, and included check-lists, approving signatures, and biographical information on nominees in separate folders. DOD documentation was generally better because DOD had established criteria and procedures for screening candidates in the programs it manages. These procedures

include a records retention requirement of at least 10 years for specific programs.

State's guidance to the posts also stated that each post should designate an embassy point of contact, such as political counselor, to coordinate a comprehensive review of candidates for assistance by relevant members of the country team. However, we found that such coordination had not occurred before 2004 for Foreign Operations Appropriations Act-funded law enforcement training. For example, post officials in Manila and Jakarta stated that designated embassy points of contact began receiving names of candidates for law enforcement training only in early 2004.

We found that the three posts did not consistently cable names of all candidates for Foreign Operations Appropriations Act-funded training to State headquarters for vetting by bureaus because State had not yet written this procedure into guidance. Officials at State headquarters said this procedure was required. During our efforts to clarify whether this was a requirement, we asked State officials to identify the written guidance specifically requiring posts to cable candidate names back to Washington for further vetting. However, these officials could not identify any specific language prior to February 2005 when State headquarters issued new instructions to the posts. Officials at the Embassy in Jakarta said they were not aware of this procedure, did not cable names of candidates for Foreign Operations Appropriations Act-funded training back to State headquarters, and wrote to State criticizing this as a burdensome new procedure in 2005.

Monitoring System Not
Established to Assess Posts'
Compliance with State Policies

We found that no headquarters office within State currently is charged with the responsibility of monitoring the posts' compliance with State's human rights vetting procedures. However, our internal control standards state that an organization should continually monitor as part of ongoing operations to assess the quality of performance over time.

State and post officials are uncertain which office has the overall responsibility for monitoring human rights vetting activities. Some officials said that the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor had this responsibility, while others cited the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs or the Bureau for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. Officials in each bureau were unaware of which office had this responsibility. We found that State's guidance to the posts between 1997 through 2005 contained no provision that accorded this role and responsibility to any office. State provided no evidence that any unit at State headquarters was fulfilling this function.

Without a monitoring system in place, State could not identify instances where a post was not complying with required procedures or instances where confusion about requirements existed.

- In Indonesia, 32 members from a brigade associated with prior human rights abuses were trained on six separate occasions under ICITAP between July 2002 and March 2003. However, in testimony to the House International Relations Committee in March 2003, then-Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs said that no such brigade members “currently participate in the ICITAP police program,” at the time when such individuals were participating in this training. State sought to correct this situation by issuing written guidance to the post in November 2003.
- No one at State headquarters was aware that the three posts did not consistently cable names of all candidates for Foreign Operations Appropriations Act-funded training to State headquarters for vetting by bureaus, although officials at headquarters said this was required. In reviewing cable traffic related to human rights vetting from the three posts, we found that the Jakarta Embassy had not cabled State headquarters with names of any candidates for further vetting.

State Issued New Guidance to Improve Vetting Practices in February 2005

State issued new guidance in February 2005 intended to improve the efficiency of the human rights vetting process. State announced that it had established a new human rights database, the Abuse Case Evaluation System (ACES), to be a clearinghouse for information on alleged human rights abuses. According to the guidance, data will come from sources currently used for human rights vetting, such as post reporting, press, nongovernmental organizations, national human rights commissions, and other sources. Users at posts and at State headquarters will be able to enter a comment on allegations, and the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor will check information for completeness and accuracy. As ACES becomes populated with data, it could become an important tool for posts and State to make human rights vetting more efficient and effective, as well as to facilitate human rights monitoring and reporting in general, according to the guidance. The guidance stated that posts will enter incidents of alleged human rights abuses into ACES whenever they occur or are reported to post. This step will replace the requirement that posts report alleged abuses via cable and keep track of allegations at post. Finally, the guidance established some roles and responsibilities for offices at main

State, particularly when differences arise over credibility of evidence or the response to such evidence.

However, this new system does not address all the deficiencies that we found at the three posts and adds an additional resource concern. For example, the guidance does not assign a monitoring role to any main State office or procedures to ensure posts' compliance with vetting procedures. In addition, because ACES will be a classified system, foreign national employees at posts will not be allowed access to it. Foreign nationals currently play an important role in entering and maintaining the available human rights vetting data at posts but would not be allowed to do so using the ACES database. Consequently, the new system might require cleared U.S. post officials to assume database duties that could not be conducted by foreign nationals. To date, State guidance has not addressed the potential for either shifting responsibilities from foreign to U.S. employees at posts or adding more U.S. personnel for this task.

U.S. Government Lacks an Integrated National Security Assistance Strategy Covering All U.S. Training and Assistance Provided to Foreign Security Forces

The U.S. government lacks a clear and coherent multiyear national security assistance strategy, making it difficult to assess progress in achieving stated U.S. foreign policy goals, such as stemming terrorism, promoting regional stability, and demonstrating respect for human rights. State's National Security Assistance Strategy, provided to Congress in May 2003, meets two of nine objectives of the Security Assistance Act of 2000. The strategy does not, however, identify how resources will be allocated to accomplish objectives, how programs will be combined at the country level to achieve objectives, or how security assistance programs will be coordinated with other U.S. government agencies. In addition, the strategy fails to discuss performance measures that are necessary to track the achievement of goals and objectives. State and DOD have produced a variety of other national, regional, and country-level strategic planning documents, but these documents do not collectively satisfy the act's objectives.

State's National Security Assistance Strategy Addresses Two of Nine Objectives of the Security Assistance Act of 2000

State's National Security Assistance Strategy meets two objectives of the Security Assistance Act of 2000; it is consistent with the U.S. National Security Strategy²¹ and identifies overarching security assistance objectives (see table 6). State's strategy, however, does not cover the other seven objectives of the act.

Table 6: Objectives of the Security Assistance Act of 2000 Addressed by State's National Security Assistance Strategy

Security Assistance Act of 2000 Objectives	Addressed by State's 2003 National Security Assistance Strategy
Multiyear plan for security assistance programs?	No
Consistent with the National Security Strategy of the U.S.?	Yes
Coordinated with the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff?	No
Prepared in consultation with appropriate agencies?	No
Identifies overarching security assistance objectives and how programs will contribute to achieving these objectives?	Yes
Identifies primary and secondary security assistance objectives for individual countries?	No
Identifies how resources (time, employees, funds) will be allocated to accomplish primary and secondary objectives?	No
Addresses how security assistance programs will be combined at the country level to achieve objectives?	No
Details how security assistance programs will be coordinated with other U.S. government assistance programs managed by DOD and other agencies?	No

Source: GAO analysis of State document.

²¹The U.S. National Security Strategy is prepared by the President, through the National Security Council. Its purpose is to define a strategy for maintaining U.S. security. It centers on the core national security objectives of preserving peaceful relations with other states, political and economic freedom, and respect for human dignity.

The Security Assistance Act of 2000 was designed to address previous shortcomings²² in security assistance planning by providing Congress with a clear and coherent multiyear plan for security assistance programs, on a country-by-country basis. The act urged State to submit to Congress a plan, prepared in consultation with other agencies, that identified overarching security assistance objectives, the role specific programs would play in achieving them, and resource allocations for each country. Further, the Security Assistance Act of 2002²³ required State to brief Congress on its plans and progress in formulating and implementing the strategy, and to provide a description on the actions taken to include such programs as IMET, FMF, and EDA, as well as other assistance programs to foreign security forces in the strategy.

In response to the acts of 2000 and 2002, State prepared a 16-page PowerPoint document entitled, “National Security Assistance Strategy Briefing” and used it to brief selected congressional committees in May 2003 (see app. III for the briefing). State officials in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs said that the briefing constitutes State’s current National Security Assistance Strategy and that, through negotiations with congressional committee staff, State was exempted from annually updating the strategy, as urged in the law. We reviewed the briefing to determine the extent to which the strategy addresses the nine objectives of the acts and found the following.

- The strategy is not a multiyear plan since it was prepared only once and does not discuss outyear program plans.
- The strategy was not prepared in coordination with the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. A State official reported that the briefing was given together with representatives from DSCA and OSD and provided us with OSD’s six-page briefing on “DOD Security Cooperation.” However, in reviewing State’s strategy, we did

²²The Conference Report attached to the 2000 Security Assistance Act expressed concern that the prior planning process had been “entirely insufficient and...run on an ad hoc basis,” without a “clearly articulated organizing principle” or a “coherent set of benchmarks or measurements against which the success of individual programs with various countries can be measured.” See House Conference Report No. 106-868, accompanying the Security Assistance Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-280).

²³P.L. 107-228, §1501.

not find evidence that it was coordinated with OSD or the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

- Despite congressional direction, the strategy was not prepared in consultation with other appropriate agencies. The briefing indicates that the coordination process begins at the country level, includes DOD priorities, occurs through State roundtables and an excess defense articles coordinating committee, and through “day-to-day coordination.” However, State does not further detail whether it coordinates with other appropriate agencies that provide assistance to foreign security forces, such as Justice.
- The strategy does not discuss specific security assistance objectives for each program on a country-by-country basis. Key countries such as Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand (among others) are identified but the strategy does not identify which programs and security assistance tools are being implemented in those countries.
- The strategy does not discuss the resources needed or used for the various programs and how they will be combined at the country level to achieve objectives. The outline accompanying the briefing asserts that State’s bureau and mission performance plans discuss how military assistance tools contribute to achieving U.S. foreign policy goals at the regional and country level, respectively. However, the strategy does not incorporate key activity and resource information from these documents;
- Although the strategy lists key countries, it does not address how the various programs are to be combined within each country to achieve objectives. As mentioned, we identified at least 12 programs that provide assistance to foreign security forces in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand. However, the strategy does not discuss how programs funded by State’s Bureau of International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement in Thailand, for example, are combined with DOD’s in-country counternarcotics activities.
- Finally, the strategy does not detail how security assistance programs will be coordinated with other U.S. government assistance programs managed by DOD and other agencies. Specifically, it does not identify all other forms of assistance provided to foreign security forces under at least three different funding sources—State, Defense, and Justice. State officials said they are aware of related programs funded by DOD and

Justice that provide assistance to foreign security forces, but that they do not consider those programs “security assistance” and would not include them in a National Security Assistance Strategy.

In addition, the strategy fails to discuss the performance measures²⁴ that can be used to assess progress towards achieving goals. Our prior work has emphasized that agencies should link strategic planning to performance measures, and that performance measures can better inform—or justify—how resources should be allocated to accomplish program objectives. Officials in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand acknowledged that it is difficult to generate quantitative performance measures for some security assistance programs, but highlighted several qualitative measures, or “big wins” in the region that help illustrate the effectiveness of U.S. security assistance programs. For example, a senior U.S. official in Thailand stated that Thai security forces are very supportive of the U.S. government’s war on terrorism and of reducing the demand for drugs. In the Philippines, U.S. government officials highlighted the positive impact U.S. government security assistance programs have had on the Philippine Defense Reform effort.

Although not reflected in State’s strategy, some efforts have been made to develop more quantifiable measures. For example, State’s Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs includes quantitative measures for programs in its official interagency or intergovernmental agreements with Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand. Also, the Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART)²⁵ uses performance measures to evaluate some of State’s programs that provide assistance to foreign security forces (and other federal government programs). As part of the executive budget formulation process, PART evaluators assess programs by applying 25 questions under four broad topics: (1) program purpose and design, (2) strategic planning, (3) program management, and (4) program results (i.e., whether a program

²⁴Performance measures provide a succinct and concrete statement of expected performance for subsequent comparison with actual performance. In general, performance measures are a tabulation, calculation, recording of activity or effort, or assessment of results compared with intended purpose, that can be expressed quantitatively or in another way that indicates a level or degree of performance.

²⁵PART was developed as a key element of the President’s Management Agenda and is intended to assess and improve program performance so that the federal government can achieve better results.

is meeting its long-term and annual goals).²⁶ The 2004 PART reviews of State's ATA program and Security Assistance Programs to the Western Hemisphere were rated as "effective" and "moderately effective," respectively.²⁷ However, we found that the latter review has limitations because it identifies multiple programs, but rates them as one unit of analysis. We reported in January 2004 that inherent challenges exist in assigning a single rating to programs that have multiple purposes and goals. In addition, the report cited that PART has merit but remains "a work in progress that needs considerable revisions to be an objective, evidence-based assessment tool."²⁸

DOD's unified commands operate a Theater Security Cooperation Management Information System (TSCMIS) to track training and other activities with foreign security forces in their regional areas of responsibility. Officials can use the system to assess the effect of DOD events on country-level goals and objectives. U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) officials reported that TSCMIS captures and stores key program data, but due to resource constraints, they are uncertain whether information is consistently entered into the system or maintained. In addition, the assessments are conducted by activity managers and country directors and are therefore not independent reviews of programs.

Related State and DOD Documents Address Selected Objectives of the Security Assistance Act of 2000

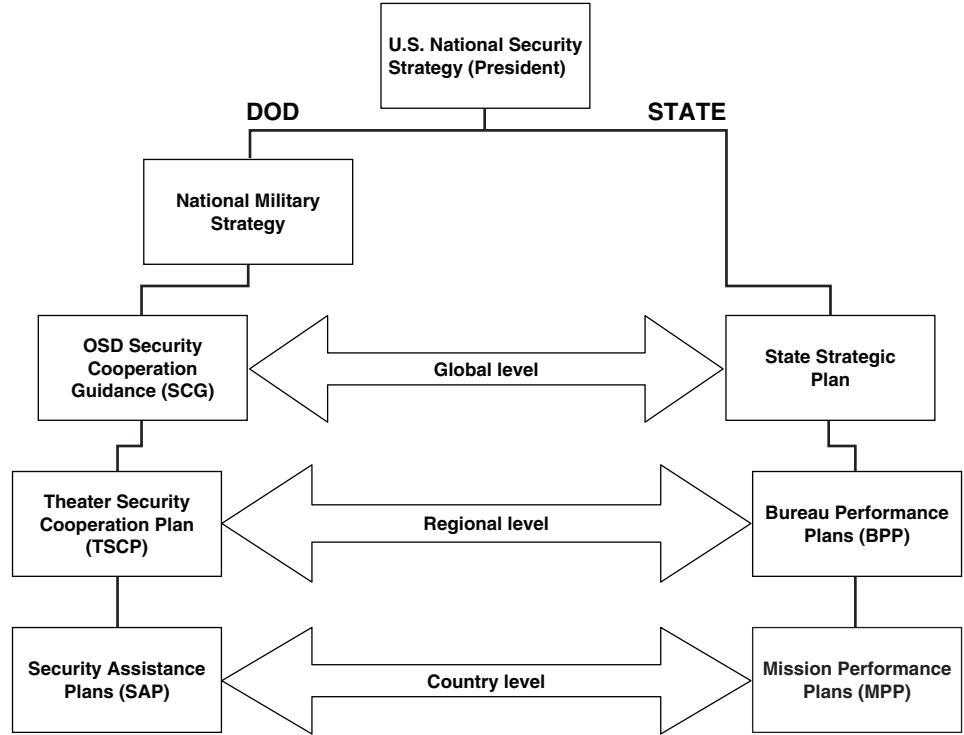
State and DOD annually develop various country, regional, and national strategy and planning documents that address some objectives of the Security Assistance Act of 2000. Figure 4 illustrates how these documents relate to each other. Appendix IV contains a detailed analysis of how other State and DOD planning documents address objectives of the act. Although none of these documents constitute a single, multiyear national security assistance strategy that covers all agency programs, we found that they offer the potential for developing the comprehensive assistance strategy called for in the act.

²⁶Additional questions are unique depending on the type of program (e.g., competitive grant, regulatory based, direct federal, etc.).

²⁷PART uses five rating categories to assess programs: (1) effective, (2) moderately effective, (3) adequate, (4) ineffective, and (5) results not demonstrated.

²⁸GAO. *Performance Budgeting: Observations on the Use of OMB's Program Assessment Rating Tool for the Fiscal Year 2004 Budget*, [GAO-04-174](#) (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 2004).

Figure 4: State and DOD Strategic Planning Documents



Source: GAO analysis of State and DOD documents.

Note: The U.S. National Military Strategy is guided by the goals and objectives contained in the President's "National Security Strategy" and serves to implement the Secretary of Defense's 2004 "National Defense Strategy of the United States of America."

We found that some State planning documents address certain objectives of the act. For example, State develops annual Mission Performance Plans (MPP) for each of its overseas posts. The 2006 MPPs for Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand address some objectives of the Security Assistance Act because they contain information on some programs that provide assistance to foreign security forces, are generally consistent with the National Security Strategy of the United States, and are prepared in consultation with appropriate agencies at each post. State also prepares annual regional level Bureau Performance Plans (BPPs) that are consistent with the National Security Strategy of the United States, and to some extent, address how combining resources and programs will achieve regional objectives.

DOD also produces annual country and regional planning documents that address some objectives of the Security Assistance Act. For example, DOD's annual country-specific security assistance plans for the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand meet some objectives of the act because they are consistent with the National Security Strategy of the United States, include some discussion of DOD-implemented assistance to foreign security forces and how the assistance will be combined and contribute to achieving certain "end states." Similarly, DOD's Theater Security Cooperation Plans (TSCP) are prepared by DOD's unified commands and include regional security assistance and other activities for the current year, plus the next 2 fiscal years.²⁹ PACOM's fiscal year 2004 TSCP addresses selected objectives of the act. It is consistent with the U.S. National Security Strategy, is coordinated with the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and includes discussion of certain security cooperation activities.

In commenting on a draft of this report, State observed that our report does not include information about the Global Affairs Dashboard pilot project, which State said has the potential to become a useful tool for security assistance strategic planning. We were not informed in the course of our review of the Global Dashboard, which has yet to be developed and deployed.

Conclusion

U.S. agencies do not have adequate assurance that U.S. training funds are being used to train and equip only foreign security forces with good human rights backgrounds. Because they have weak internal controls, the agencies inconsistently apply human rights vetting requirements. Improved internal controls would provide greater assurance that all individuals are properly vetted for human rights issues before receiving U.S. assistance. State has not produced a clear and coherent national security assistance strategy meeting the objectives of the Security Assistance Act of 2000. As a result, it may be difficult for Congress to assess the contributions that U.S. security assistance programs make to broader U.S. foreign policy objectives and to have assurance that the programs' objectives are being met. Without an integrated strategy for U.S. security assistance that, at a minimum, addresses the nine elements of the Security Assistance Act of 2000, the potential exists for uncoordinated approaches, duplication of efforts, or gaps in coverage. As a result, State and Congress will be

²⁹We reviewed TSCP's for four of DOD's nine unified commands—U.S. Central Command, European Command, Joint Forces Command, and Pacific Command.

deprived of an important source of information for making future resource allocations and program decisions. Since a number of related State and DOD strategic planning processes are already in place, the agencies could use the plans produced under these related processes as the basis for producing a new strategy that fully meets the objectives of the Security Assistance Act of 2000.

Recommendations for Executive Action

To help provide assurance that foreign candidates of U.S. security assistance programs comply with existing legislative restrictions and State policies on human rights, we recommend that the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretaries of Defense and Justice take the following three actions to strengthen management controls by issuing new consolidated guidance for vetting foreign security units. As part of these new controls, posts and headquarters units should establish

- the roles and responsibilities of posts and headquarters units for vetting foreign candidates for human rights consideration;
- written policies and procedures covering all entities involved in the vetting process at posts, including documentation and record retention policies specifying what documentation is needed and where and how long vetting files should be maintained; and
- monitoring mechanisms and a central focal point to verify that these procedures are being carried out properly.

To help provide both State and Congress with the information needed on how U.S. security assistance programs help support U.S. foreign policy and security objectives, we recommend that the Secretary of State take the following actions using existing plans and strategies within State and DOD as the basis for developing an integrated strategic plan for all U.S. government assistance programs that provide training, equipment, or technical assistance to foreign security forces (military and police). This multiyear plan should be periodically reported to Congress in response to the Security Assistance Act of 2000, which urged the Secretary of State to develop a multiyear security assistance plan. In addition, the strategy should

- be coordinated with the Departments of Defense and Justice and any other agencies providing assistance to foreign security forces;

-
- identify all federal agency programs providing assistance to foreign security forces, regardless of their funding source;
 - describe all related resource allocations used to support program goals, and;
 - incorporate quantitative and qualitative performance measures designed to determine the extent to which country programs contribute to broader U.S. foreign policy and security objectives.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

We provided a draft of this report to the Secretaries of Defense and State and to the Attorney General for their review and comment. We received written responses from the Secretaries of Defense and State that are reprinted in appendixes V and VI. The Secretaries of Defense and State and the Attorney General also provided us with technical comments, which we incorporated as appropriate.

The Secretary of Defense concurred with our report in principle. However, in technical comments on a draft of this report, DOD asserted that our report states that DOD assistance programs in Indonesia and Thailand are “100 percent compliant” with human rights vetting requirements. We disagree with DOD’s comment because our report did not conclude that DOD programs in Indonesia and Thailand were “100 percent compliant.” Instead, our draft report stated that all 35 of the limited sample of trainee files we reviewed in these two countries showed some evidence of human rights vetting. The small sample size of the DOD-sponsored trainees relative to the much larger sample of law enforcement trainees precluded us from projecting our findings to the entire universe of DOD-sponsored trainees. Furthermore, DOD later acknowledged in its comments on the draft report that in-country trainees in Thailand—about half of the 795 trainees for fiscal years 2001 to 2004—were not vetted during the period we reviewed.

The Secretary of State acknowledged the need for continued improvement on human rights vetting procedures but stated that it is operating its assistance programs in full compliance with the law. State commented that any vetting of individuals is done as a matter of State policy and practice, not as a matter of law. We agree with State’s comment. However, in reviewing State’s application of its policy on human rights vetting of individuals, we found significant weaknesses that resulted in an estimated 6,900 individuals receiving U.S. training assistance without any evidence

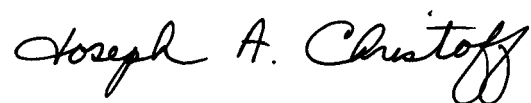
that they had first been vetted for gross violations of human rights. Therefore, we recommended in our report that State strengthen its management controls on vetting to meet its stated policy goal of not providing U.S. assistance to suspected gross human rights violators.

State also commented that it has fully complied with congressional intent regarding a national security assistance strategy. State disagreed with our finding that the national security assistance strategy met only two of nine objectives of the law. It said that our findings are based on incomplete information because many of the objectives were met and discussed in a May 2003 oral briefing with selected Congressional staff, and that the absence of further requests for a briefing on the national security assistance strategy or additional requirements relieved it of further obligations. We disagree with State's comments. The documents, which State identified as representing a national security assistance strategy, met only two of nine objectives that the law urged State to address in crafting this strategy. The briefing was a good first step, but a detailed written plan is needed for wider distribution, and for providing documentation for tracking progress in moving forward.

We are sending copies of this report to interested congressional committees, and the Secretaries of Defense, Justice, and State. We will also make copies available to others upon request. In addition, this report will be available at no charge on the GAO Web site at <http://www.gao.gov>.

If you or your staff have any questions concerning this report, please contact me at (202) 512-8979 or at christoffj@gao.gov. Contact points for our Office of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this report. GAO staff who made major contributions to this report are listed in appendix VII.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph A. Christoff". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "C" at the end.

Joseph A. Christoff
Director, International Affairs and Trade

List of Congressional Committees

The Honorable Richard G. Lugar
Chairman
The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Chairman
The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,
and Related Programs
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Henry J. Hyde
Chairman
The Honorable Tom Lantos
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on International Relations
House of Representatives

The Honorable Charles H. Smith
Chairman
The Honorable Donald M. Payne
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights,
and International Operations
Committee on International Relations
House of Representatives

The Honorable Jim Leach
Chairman
The Honorable Eni F. H. Faleomavaega
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific
Committee on International Relations
House of Representatives

The Honorable Jim Kolbe
Chairman
The Honorable Nita M. Lowey
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing,
and Related Programs
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives

Scope and Methodology

To identify the nature and extent of U.S. assistance to foreign security forces in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand, we met with officials of the Departments of Defense, State, and Justice in Washington, D.C., responsible for administering various aspects of U.S. assistance programs to foreign security forces. We also met with U.S. Pacific Command officials in Honolulu, Hawaii; and U.S. Embassy and foreign government officials in Manila, the Philippines; Jakarta, Indonesia; and Bangkok, Thailand. We also obtained the statutory authorizations for these programs from program officials and from our independent legal searches. We obtained data on the nature and extent of the activities funded by these programs in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand from program officials and State and DOD Web sites. We reviewed the reliability of funding data provided by State and DOD by comparing it with similar data obtained from other sources to check for completeness, consistency, and reasonableness. We also interviewed program officials responsible for managing the data to assess how it was developed and maintained. We found the data sufficiently reliable for representing the nature and extent of program funding.

To assess the extent to which the three posts included in our review complied with human rights vetting requirements from 2001 to 2004, we reviewed program policy and procedures issued by State and DOD officials in Washington, D.C., and at the three posts, and how these procedures were implemented at each post. We also interviewed relevant officials in Washington, PACOM, and the three posts, and discussed vetting requirements and processes. At each post, we asked the relevant post officials to identify the total number of foreign security officials trained under all programs provided under the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act and DOD appropriations act subject to the Leahy restrictions from 2001 to 2004. We then randomly selected and reviewed program files for those officials. We reviewed the files for compliance with human rights vetting requirements as set forth in legislation and State policy guidance. To conduct the file review, we used a data collection instrument to systematically capture whether key steps in the post's human rights vetting process occurred, such as whether the political affairs office at each post was involved.

We were able to estimate that 87 percent of files for DOD trainees in the Philippines had some documentation subject to a sampling error of plus or minus 10 percent. The 95 percent confidence interval surrounding this estimate ranges from 80 percent to 92 percent. However, due to small sample sizes for the other agencies in the other countries, we were unable to make other reliable estimates about the percentage of files for which

some vetting occurred. The small sample sizes occurred because, after we had drawn our sample, U.S. officials told us that no files existed for several large groups of trainees, including approximately 4,000 trainees under the ICITAP program in Indonesia and 1,439 trainees from the Narcotics Affairs Section in Thailand. In addition, after we had drawn our sample, we were told about other groups of trainees that had not been vetted. As a result, our estimates for the numbers of trainees for which no vetting occurred are based on officials' estimates of the numbers of trainees that had taken the training that should have been vetted, not the file review we conducted. To assess the reliability of the estimates on trainees that had not received training, we interviewed officials, and compared the estimates they provided with other available information. While we found that some of the components in the estimates were less precise than others, we determined that these estimates were sufficiently reliable to indicate that many thousands of trainees had not been vetted.

In addition, to obtain a general understanding of the human rights situation in each country, we also met with State human rights officers, national commissions on human rights in each country, as well as representatives of nongovernmental organizations involved with human rights issues. Specifically, in the Philippines we met with Task Force Detainees; in Indonesia, we met with The Commission for Involuntary Disappearance and Victims of Violence, Voice of Human Rights in Indonesia, and the National Forum for the Commission on Human Rights in Papua; and in Thailand we met with Forum Asia and Human Rights Watch. In addition, we met with nongovernmental organizations in Washington, D.C., to understand the general human rights situation on countries included in our review: Amnesty International, East Timor Action Network, Human Rights Watch, and the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights.

To assess the U.S. government's national security assistance strategy, we met with State, DOD, and Justice officials in Washington, D.C., responsible for managing and administering U.S. assistance to foreign security forces. We also met with U.S. Pacific Command officials in Honolulu, Hawaii; and U.S. Embassy officials in Manila, the Philippines; Jakarta, Indonesia; and Bangkok, Thailand. We analyzed key planning documents from State and DOD to determine the extent to which they addressed the nine strategic objectives of the Security Assistance Act of 2000, that urged State to develop a multiyear National Security Assistance Strategy. As part of this assessment, we analyzed State's Strategic Plan, Mission Performance Plans for each post we visited, and the Bureau Performance Plan for the Bureau of East Asia and Pacific Affairs. We also assessed PACOM's Theater

Security Cooperation Plan, reviewed three other unified command's theater security cooperation plans, and assessed security assistance plans for the three countries included in our review. To address the extent to which State and DOD have performance measures for programs that train and equip foreign security forces, we interviewed agency officials, reviewed OMB's 2004 and 2005 Performance Assessment Rating Tool assessments, DOD's Theater Security Cooperation Management Information System, and Justice's Letters of Agreement with other agencies and with the three countries included in our review.

We conducted this review from June 2004 to June 2005 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

Descriptions of Assistance Programs to Foreign Security Forces

We use the term “allocations” to describe the broad mix of appropriated and nonappropriated assistance being provided to foreign security forces in these three countries. State and DOD appropriations accounted for 83 percent of the total; nonappropriated assistance in the form of Excess Defense Articles and drawdowns from DOD stocks accounted for 13 percent of the total; and DOD and Justice expenditures accounted for 4 percent of the total. Expenditures data were used for the DOD’s JCET program and Justice’s DEA and FBI training activities because separate appropriations and country allocation data does not exist.

Table 7: Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA)

Managing unit(s)	The Department of State, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, Office of Antiterrorism Assistance implements and manages ATA with policy guidance from the State Department Coordinator for Counterterrorism.
Description of activities	The ATA program supports a variety of activities to help fight terrorism by building the capacity of key countries abroad to fight terrorism; establishing security relationships between U.S. and foreign officials to strengthen cooperative anti-terrorism efforts; sharing modern effective anti-terrorism techniques; and leading training courses covering such areas as law enforcement, protection of national leadership, control of borders, protection of critical infrastructure, crisis management.
ATA by country (fiscal years 2001 to 2004)	Indonesia: \$14,786,000 Philippines: \$1,939,000 Thailand: \$0
Legal authority for the program	Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, P.L. 87-195, as amended, 22 USC §2349a.

Source: GAO analysis of agency data.

Appendix II
Descriptions of Assistance Programs to
Foreign Security Forces

Table 8: Drawdown

Managing unit(s)	The Department of Defense, Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) is the agency tasked to execute DOD drawdown. DSCA coordinates Defense, State, the National Security Council, and others to develop drawdown packages. DSCA works with the military services to identify available defense articles and services and monitors the progress of deliveries.
Description of activities	Drawdown is the transfer of in-stock defense articles and services from the inventory of the DOD, as well as any agency of the U.S. government, to foreign countries and international organizations in response to unforeseen military emergencies, humanitarian catastrophes, peacekeeping needs, or counternarcotics requirements.
Drawdown by country (fiscal years 2001 to 2004) ^a	Philippines: \$10,000,000 Indonesia: \$0 Thailand: \$0
Legal authority for the program	Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, 22 USC §§2318 and 2348a

Source: GAO analysis of agency data.

^aFunds are not appropriated for drawdown.

Table 9: Excess Defense Articles (EDA)

Managing unit(s)	The military departments determine excess defense articles and recommend an allocation of excess assets to the Excess Defense Articles Coordinating Committee. The Committee is co-chaired by the DOD's DSCA and State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs' Office of Regional Security and Arms Transfers. The Coordinating Committee approves allocation of EDA and the military departments work with the foreign government to execute the transfer.
Description of activities	EDAs are nonappropriated assistance in the form of excess U.S. defense articles drawn from DOD stocks. Defense articles declared as excess by the military departments can be offered to foreign governments.
EDA by country (fiscal years 2001 to 2004) ^a	Philippines: \$19,504,000 Thailand: \$5,972,000 Indonesia: \$0
Legal authority for the program	Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, 22 USC §2321j

Source: GAO analysis of agency data.

^aFunds are not appropriated for drawdown.

Appendix II
Descriptions of Assistance Programs to
Foreign Security Forces

Table 10: Economic Support Fund (ESF)

Managing unit(s)	U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) administers the program in foreign countries. USAID transfers some ESF funds to State for administering certain activities.
Description of activities	The ESF promotes economic and political stability in strategically important regions where the U.S. has special security interests. The funds are generally provided as grants or loans provided on a grant basis and are available for a variety of economic purposes, such as infrastructure and development projects.
ESF by country (fiscal years 2001 to 2004)	Indonesia: \$23,200,000 Philippines: \$0 Thailand: \$0
Legal authority for the program	Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, 22 USC §2346 et. seq.

Source: GAO analysis of agency data.

Table 11: Foreign Military Financing (FMF)

Managing unit(s)	Department of State, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Defense Security Cooperation Agency is the implementing agency.
Description of activities	FMF provides grants and loans to foreign governments and international organizations for the acquisition of U.S. defense equipment, services, and training. FMF assists the militaries of friendly countries to promote bilateral, regional, and multilateral coalition efforts, notably in the global war on terrorism; improve military capabilities to contribute to international crisis response operations, including peacekeeping and humanitarian crises; contribute to the professionalism of military forces to include the rule of law and military subordination to civilian control; enhance interoperability of military forces, maintain support for democratically elected governments; and to support the U.S. industrial base by promoting the export of U.S. defense-related goods and services.
FMF by country (fiscal years 2001 to 2004)	Philippines: \$115,745,000 Thailand: \$4,171,000 Indonesia: \$0
Legal authority for the program	Arms Export Control Act of 1976, P.L. 90-629, as amended, 22 USC §2763.

Source: GAO analysis of agency data.

Appendix II
Descriptions of Assistance Programs to
Foreign Security Forces

Table 12: International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INCLE)

Managing unit(s)	Department of State, Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) administers the program. INL uses interagency agreements with 16 other U.S. government agencies, including USAID, Justice, Treasury, Homeland Security, Defense, DEA, FBI, and the Coast Guard, to carry out INCLE activities.
Description of activities	Development and coordination of U.S. international drug and crime policies and programs through bilateral, regional, and global initiatives that build law enforcement capabilities of foreign governments. These efforts center on two primary goals: (1) ensuring that international trafficking in drugs, persons, and other illicit goods are disrupted and criminal organizations dismantled; and (2) encouraging states to cooperate internationally to set up and implement antidrug and anticrime standards.
INCLE by country (fiscal years 2001 to 2004)	Thailand: \$13,795,000 Indonesia: \$4,000,000 Philippines: \$2,000,000
Legal authority for the program	Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, 22 USC §2291.

Source: GAO analysis of agency data.

Table 13: International Military Education and Training (IMET)

Managing unit(s)	Department of State, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs has authority over the program; DSCA is the implementing agency.
Description of activities	The IMET program provides training to military and related civilian personnel. IMET training exposes foreign students to U.S. military organizations and procedures and the manner in which military organizations function under civilian control. IMET aims to strengthen democratic and civilian control of foreign militaries, improve their understanding of U.S. military doctrine and operational procedures, and to enhance interoperability. IMET facilitates the development of professional and personal relationships, which aim to provide U.S. access and influence to foreign governments.
IMET by country (fiscal years 2001 to 2004)	Philippines: \$8,561,000 Thailand: \$7,940,000 Indonesia: \$1,275,000
Legal authority for the program	Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, 22 USC §2347.

Source: GAO analysis of agency data.

Appendix II
Descriptions of Assistance Programs to
Foreign Security Forces

Table 14: Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET)

Managing unit(s)	Department of Defense, Special Operations Command
Description of activities	JCET activities involve training U.S. Special Operations Forces with foreign forces to ensure readiness regarding language, culture, knowledge of foreign environments, combat and combat support, and instructor skills. Training ranges from land navigation, first aid, basic rifle marksmanship, leadership techniques, and special operations techniques and tactics. The primary purpose of JCET is to train U.S. Special Operations Forces. Benefits to the host nation forces are incidental.
JCET by country (fiscal years 2001 to 2004)	Thailand: \$5,040,000 Philippines: \$4,730,00 Indonesia: \$0
Legal authority for the program	National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993, as amended, (P.L. 102-190), 10 U.S.C. §2011.

Source: GAO analysis of agency data.

Table 15: Peacekeeping Operations (PKO)

Managing unit(s)	Department of State, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs has authority over the program and the Defense Security Cooperation Agency is the implementing agency.
Description of activities	PKO funding supports multilateral peacekeeping and regional stability operations that are not funded through the UN. PKO funding enhances the ability of other countries to participate in voluntary peacekeeping and humanitarian operations and supports regional peacekeeping operations for which neighboring countries take primary responsibility.
PKO by country (fiscal years 2001 to 2004)	Philippines: \$15,000,000 Thailand: \$500,000 Indonesia: \$0
Legal authority for the program	Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, 22 USC §2348.

Source: GAO analysis of agency data.

Appendix II
Descriptions of Assistance Programs to
Foreign Security Forces

Table 16: Regional Defense Counterterrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP)

Managing unit(s)	Department of Defense, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-intensity Conflict
Description of activities	The CTFP provides education and training to foreign military officers, ministry of defense civilians, and other foreign security officials involved in combating terrorism. Foreign students attend U.S. military educational institutions and selected regional centers for non-lethal training. CTFP is used to bolster the capacity of friendly foreign nations to detect, monitor, and interdict or disrupt the activities of terrorist networks ranging from weapons trafficking and terrorist-related financing to actual operational planning by terror groups.
CTFP by country (fiscal years 2001 to 2004)	Indonesia: \$4,200,00 Philippines: \$2,000,000 Thailand: \$769,000
Legal authority for the program	Defense Appropriations Acts of 2002 (P.L. 107-117) and 2004, (P.L. 108-87).

Source: GAO analysis of agency data.

Table 17: DEA Training

Managing unit(s)	Drug Enforcement Administration, International Training Section
Description of activities	DEA's International Training Section offers basic and advanced drug enforcement seminars, International Narcotics Enforcement Managers Seminars, specialized training including training for Special Investigations Units, and offers instruction at the International Law Enforcement Academies. These activities aim to improve law enforcement capabilities of foreign law enforcement agencies to encourage and assist them in developing self-sufficient counter narcotics programs.
DEA training by country (fiscal years 2001 to 2004)	Thailand: \$398,000 Indonesia: \$61,000 Philippines: \$51,000
Legal authority for the program	Department of Commerce and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2002 (P.L. 107-77). Consolidated Appropriation Resolution, 2003 (P.L. 108-7). Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2004 (P.L. 108-199).

Source: GAO analysis of agency data.

Appendix II
Descriptions of Assistance Programs to
Foreign Security Forces

Table 18: FBI Training

Managing unit(s)	Federal Bureau of Investigation International Training Assistance
Description of activities	The FBI's international training assistance includes several activities: country capabilities/needs assessments; training of foreign officials carried out in foreign countries; training of foreign officials conducted in the United States; FBI instructor development; training at International Law Enforcement Academies in Budapest, Hungary and Bangkok, Thailand; and through the Mexican/American Law Enforcement Training Initiative and the Pacific Rim Training Initiative.
FBI training by country (fiscal years 2001 to 2004)	Philippines: \$109,000 Thailand: \$11,000 Indonesia: \$0

Source: GAO analysis of agency data.

State Department National Security Assistance Strategy Briefing



National Security Assistance Strategy Briefing

Lincoln P. Bloomfield, Jr.
Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs

May 9, 2003

UNCLASSIFIED



Introduction

- Military Assistance Accounts
- Strategic Objectives of Military Assistance
- Regional Objectives
- Coordination Process
- Programmatic Issues
- Obstacles to Strategic Approach
- Resource/Legislative Needs

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The National Security Strategy of the United States

- Outlines 8 ways to achieve our national security goals of political and economic freedom, peaceful relations with other states, and respect for human dignity.
- Military assistance major contributor to three of those pathways:
 - Strengthening alliances to defeat global terrorism
 - Working with others to defuse regional conflicts
 - Develop agendas for cooperative action with other centers of global power

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Strategic Objectives of Military Assistance

- To equip and train allies, friends, partners and international organizations to ensure they are capable of sharing burdens in joint missions ranging from humanitarian crises to war.
- To increase interoperability – both in doctrine and in equipment – with U.S., NATO forces, and regional coalitions.
- To foster strong bilateral military relationships and strengthen self-defense capabilities.
- To promote key American values with respect to democracy, human rights, and civilian rule of the military.

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Regional Building Blocks

- Regional Bureau Program Plans (BPPs) outline our foreign policy activities for each region for two fiscal years .
- Regional BPPs are derived from Mission Program Plans from each embassy in the region.
- Military assistance is one of many tools used to achieve USG foreign policy goals.
- Posts formulate 5-year plans, posted in a web-tool accessible to all pertinent State and DoD offices.

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Africa Region – Military Assistance Goals

- To improve counter-terrorism capabilities.
- To increase the capacity of African countries and institutions to address regional conflicts and participate in peacekeeping missions.
- To professionalize African militaries.
- Key Programs/Countries:
 - South Africa
 - Nigeria
 - Coastal & Border Security: Djibouti, Kenya, and Ethiopia.
 - Peacekeeping capabilities: ECOWAS, Ghana, Senegal, Botswana
 - Military Health Affairs: HIV/AIDs

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East Asia Region – Military Assistance Goals

- To support host country efforts to destroy terrorist organizations and undermine support for terrorists.
- To enhance contributions to regional stability by friends and allies in the region.
- Key Programs/Countries
 - Philippines
 - Indonesia
 - Thailand

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Europe and Eurasia – Military Assistance Goals

- To expand NATO and improve its capabilities.
- To improve joint and combined capabilities and interoperability to execute CT activities.
- To encourage defense reform in the Balkans and Central Asia
- Key Programs/Countries
 - Azerbaijan
 - Georgia
 - Turkey
 - Poland
 - Romania
 - NATO Invitees

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Near East – Military Assistance Goals

- To combat terrorism and promote regional stability by strengthening regional militaries and building strong coalition capabilities
- To promote establishment of a whole, free, democratic Iraq
- To pursue Arab-Israeli Peace
- Key Programs/Countries
 - Israel
 - Jordan
 - Oman
 - Egypt
 - Bahrain

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South Asia – Military Assistance Goals

- To combat terrorism and establish stability in Afghanistan and Pakistan
- To promote regional stability through conflict resolution in India/Pakistan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka
- Key Programs/Countries
 - Afghanistan
 - Pakistan
 - Nepal
 - India

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Western Hemisphere – Military Assistance Goals

- To enhance security and stability in the Andean region.
- To protect maritime and air approaches to the U.S.
- To improve peacekeeping capabilities of key countries.
- Key Programs/Countries
 - Andean: Colombia, Ecuador, Peru
 - Maritime security: Eastern Caribbean (RSS, Jamaica/Antigua&Barbuda), Panama, Dominican Republic
 - Peacekeeping: Argentina, Uruguay

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EDA Process

- EDA availability and quality is highly variable
- Costs of transportation and refurbishment often prohibitive
- Security assistance goals form basis for evaluating priorities when country requirements can be matched against available resources

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Coordination Process

- Post is first place all mil asst tools are integrated – country team/SAOs
- DoD priorities – Security Cooperation Guidance
- State Department Roundtables and EDA Coordinating Committee
- Day-to-day coordination

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Coordination Process

- Post is first place all mil asst tools are integrated – country team/SAOs
- DoD priorities – Security Cooperation Guidance
- State Department Roundtables and EDA Coordinating Committee
- Day-to-day coordination

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Obstacles to Strategic Approach

- Funding levels
 - Base year vs. supplementals
 - Disparity with DoD budget
 - Budget Busters (Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey, Colombia)
- Sanctions and restrictions
- Military operations vs. capability building
- IMET dollar buys less
- Host country spending on military

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Resource and Legislative Needs

- Funding
- Sanctions relief for IMET

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Other State and DOD Documents Address Some Objectives of the Security Assistance Act of 2000

Objectives	State documents			DOD documents	
	State strategic plan	Bureau performance plans	Mission performance plans	Theater security cooperation plans	Security assistance/country implementation plans
1. Multiyear plan (for security assistance programs)					
2. Must be consistent with the U.S. National Security Strategy	X	X	X	X	X
3. Coordinated with the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff				X	X
4. Coordinated with all appropriate agencies			X	X	
5. Identify overarching objectives and how programs will meet them	X				X
6. Identify primary and secondary objectives for each country					
7. Identify how resources will be allocated to meet objectives					
8. Address how combining resources and programs will achieve objectives in each country		X			X
9. Details how State security assistance programs are coordinated with DOD and other agencies' security assistance programs					

Source: GAO analysis of agency documents.

Comments from the Department of Defense



DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, DC 20301-2800

JUL 18 2005

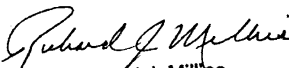
In reply refer to:
I-05/008928-A-P

Mr. Joseph A. Christoff
Director, International Affairs and Trade
U.S. Government Accountability Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Christoff:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the GAO draft report (05-793), SOUTHEAST ASIA: Better Human Rights Reviews and Strategic Planning Needed for U.S. Assistance to Foreign Security Forces, dated June 22, 2005 (GAO Code 320284).

DoD acknowledges receipt of the draft report and we concur with the report in principle. The recommendations in this report are for the State Department in consult with the DoD and other executive agencies. Technical/editorial comments were provided separately for your review and consideration. Should you have any questions or require additional clarification, please contact Lt Col Paul K. Bartlett, at (703) 601-3717, or Ms. Nancy Morgan, at (703) 601-3715.


Richard J. Millies
Acting Director

Comments from the Department of State

Note: GAO comments supplementing those in the report text appear at the end of this appendix.



United States Department of State
Assistant Secretary and Chief Financial Officer
Washington, D.C. 20520

Ms. Jacquelyn Williams-Bridgers
Managing Director
International Affairs and Trade
Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20548-0001

JUL 12 2005

Dear Ms. Williams-Bridgers:

We appreciate the opportunity to review your draft report, "SOUTHEAST ASIA: Better Human Rights Reviews and Strategic Planning Needed for Assistance to Foreign Security Forces," GAO Job Code 320284.

The enclosed Department of State comments are provided for incorporation with this letter as an appendix to the final report.

If you have any questions concerning this response, please contact Scott Kwak, Foreign Affairs Officer, Bureau of Political and Military Affairs, at (202) 647-7769.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Kaplan".

Sid Kaplan (Acting)

cc: GAO – Leslie Holen
PM – Elena Kim-Mitchell
State/OIG – Mark Duda

**Department of State Comments on GAO Draft Report
SOUTHEAST ASIA: Better Human Rights Reviews and Strategic
Planning Needed for Assistance to Foreign Security Forces**

(GAO-05-793 GAO Code 320284)

The State Department appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the draft Report "SOUTHEAST ASIA: Better Human Rights Reviews and Strategic Planning Needed for Assistance to Foreign Security Forces." These programs cover a range of important initiatives in vital Departmental strategic goals of regional stability, counterterrorism, and international crime and drugs. The Department is committed to executing its security assistance programs in a coherent, efficient manner that complies with the law and helps the United States Government achieve its foreign policy goals.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Background and Assistance to the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand

The timeframe of the Report, 2001-2004, coincides with the Global War on Terror (GWOT), during which time the USG significantly increased funding to fight terrorism around the world. As important allies in the GWOT, funding to Indonesia, Philippines, and Thailand in particular has increased substantially. For a more balanced report, GAO should consider the security assistance provided as well as the Departments' and posts' staffing levels prior to the GWOT. Such an analysis would likely reveal that the increase in assistance without a commensurate increase in staff placed an undue burden on the Department, felt most strongly at posts, to develop and carry out expanded vetting procedures.

Management Controls for Vetting Human Rights

In general, we think it is important to point out that whereas there is always room for improvement in the implementation of certain Leahy vetting procedures, the State Department is operating its assistance programs in full compliance with the law. The Leahy provision applies only to "units" of foreign security forces. Any Leahy vetting of individuals for gross human rights violations is carried out strictly as a matter of policy, not as a matter of

See comment 1.

law. Indeed, the vetting of individuals identified for individual training reflects a policy decision by the Department of State to take additional measures to avoid the provision of U.S. assistance to suspected gross human rights violators, whether inside or outside the security unit setting. In fact, Senator Leahy's staff on several occasions have expressed appreciation for the seriousness with which the Department takes responsibilities for vetting.

See comment 2.

U.S. Embassies in the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand have reviewed their human rights vetting procedures for law enforcement training and brought them into compliance with Department guidance. The State-run International Law Enforcement Academies (ILEA) fully comply with human rights vetting requirements. ILEA Bangkok, as well as other ILEA institutions, follow the ILEA standard operating procedures in order to comply with congressional mandates. Human rights vetting procedures have been in place since ILEA Bangkok's inception, which includes the timeframe of the GAO's review (2001-2004). In addition, law enforcement training for Filipino security forces at the ILEA and those sponsored by Diplomatic Security's office of Anti-Terrorism Assistance (DS/ATA) have been fully incorporated in the Mission's human rights vetting process since ILEA Bangkok's inception in 1999. Records that the Mission vetted hundreds of individuals between 1999 and 2004 were made available for the GAO team during their time at Embassy Manila.

See comment 3.

With regard to the establishment of clear vetting policies and procedures, the Department acknowledges the need for continued improvement, especially as it concerns better oversight of implementation at posts. The Department has provided a clear articulation of Department vetting policies to posts, as set out in 2003 STATE 34981 and previous guidance. Furthermore, some oversight is provided through the established channel of periodic OIG inspections at posts. However, the Department purposely chose to allow flexibility for posts to decide how to implement Department guidelines to accommodate for the vast differences in post circumstances, staffing levels and workloads at various posts. The guidance is specific enough for posts to carry out vetting, while being flexible enough for each post to implement it for maximum effectiveness and efficiency.

Recognizing the significant workload thorough vetting requires, State has developed a comprehensive, custom-designed database, the Abuse Case Evaluation System (ACES), which, as the Report acknowledges, we believe will become an important tool for increasing the effectiveness and efficiency

of human rights vetting. Guidance on transitioning from the old system to the new system is provided in 05 STATE 21314 and on the website we have established, <http://aces.state.sgov.gov>.

See comment 4.

We note that the GAO report recommends centralizing oversight of posts' compliance with vetting requirements in a single bureau or office. Since assistance programs are managed and directed by several different Bureaus and agencies, centralization of authority for vetting requirements in one bureau is complicated by dispersed funding authorities as well as staff and resource constraints. For these reasons, ultimate responsibility for vetting rests with regional bureaus and posts. Full deployment and functionality of ACES should mitigate the need for centralization in one bureau; however, as mentioned in the Report, administration of this system may require additional staff and resources in DRL and certain posts. Discussions of the new vetting guidance to be implemented in 2005 highlighted the fact that posts will need to bear the primary responsibility for implementing vetting procedures, since posts program the funds, have close access to the most information about individuals in security forces, and select individuals and units for assistance. The new vetting guidance imposes a uniform standard as it instructs posts to deny assistance or seek guidance from the Department if derogatory information is found at post on an individual or unit proposed for assistance.

National Security Assistance Strategy

See comment 5.

The GAO report asserts that the U.S. government lacks a clear and coherent multi-year national security assistance strategy, and that the strategy provided to Congress in May 2003 meets only two of nine objectives of the Security Assistance Act of 2000. However, despite repeated discussions to clarify the term "security assistance" as interpreted by statute, GAO apparently continues to define security assistance more broadly, to include a wide range of programs and activities supporting foreign military and police forces. This undermines the basis for GAO's assessment that the Department did not fully comply with section 1501 requirements of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, FY2003, to brief appropriate congressional committees regarding a national security assistance strategy. The Department has traditionally used the term security assistance to include Foreign Military Financing (FMF), International Military Education and Training (IMET), Peacekeeping Operations (PKO), and Excess Defense Article (EDA). Congressional intent for this term, and for what was

See comment 6.

expected in the strategy, was clear since section 1501 referred to section 501(b) of the Security Assistance Act of 2000, which directed that the strategy cover assistance provided through FMF, IMET, and EDA. Therefore, the briefing included each of these programs and was deemed to be wholly satisfactory by the Committees represented at the time. Since there have been no further requests for a briefing on the national security assistance strategy, the Department continued to understand that there were no additional requirements from Congress in this regard.

See comment 7.

Furthermore, assertions that the national security assistance strategy presented in the oral 2003 briefing meets only two of nine objectives set forth in the Security Assistance Act of 2000 are based on incomplete information. Most of these assertions are based primarily on the PowerPoint slides that accompanied the briefing (equating the slides with the strategy), and not the briefing itself. Several of the objectives were in fact met and discussed in the briefing (see Corrections below), including the development of a multi-year plan for assistance programs, coordination and consultation with other agencies, identification of primary and secondary objectives, and more.

See comment 8.

One component of the Department's strategy not discussed in the report is the Global Affairs Dashboard, a project of the Office of Strategic and Performance Planning in the Bureau of Resource Management. When fully developed and deployed, the Dashboard will draw on the performance and planning database to graphically display, by country, region, program or strategic goal or objective, the fiscal and human resources devoted to the particular analytical element. This will enable clearer and more comprehensive analysis of where, for example, FMF, IMET and PKO as well as other FOAA funded assistance has been, or is requested to be, spent. The Dashboard may become, with appropriate management attention, a useful tool for security assistance strategic planning.

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

Assistance to the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand and Management Controls

See comment 9.

- The report incorrectly and repeatedly refers to IMET and FMF as DoD programs (see footnote ^a pg. 19, for example). These are FOAA

programs and as such, the State Department has set vetting procedures for them. In addition, DoD sets its own procedures for training it carries out.

See comment 10.

- Page 3, 17: The report maintains that State applies the Leahy guidance “to individuals as well as foreign security units.” This application is true, however, only in cases in which the individuals have been selected for individual training such as IMET. The legislation does not require the vetting of individuals when the training in question is unit based. It should also be clarified that any vetting of individuals is done as a matter of State policy and practice, not as a matter of law.

See comment 11.

- Page 8: the report states that “the [Thailand] Government’s human rights record worsened with regard to extrajudicial killings and arbitrary arrests.” This language is present in the 2003 human rights report, but not in the 2004 report. In 2004, our assessment was: “The Government generally respected the human rights of its citizens; however, there were significant problems in some areas.”

See comment 12.

- Pages 4, 16, and 22: References to a lack of formal policies to govern vetting procedures at Embassy Manila are incorrect. Vetting documents and records at post available from 2000 spell out the formal policy, which has been in place since 1999. The policy is detailed in cable 2000 Manila 230, which was written in response to 1999 State 240150 requesting procedural clarification of the Human Rights Vetting process. During the recent GAO visit, Mission outlined 2004 improvements in the working level checklist of procedures implemented at Mission’s own initiative in fall 2004. All of these documents were made available for the GAO team during their review at Embassy Manila.

See comment 13.

- Page 12, Figure 3 of the report is incorrect. No EDA articles were transferred to Indonesia.

See comment 14.

- Page 12, Figure 3 incorrectly indicates no CTFP allocation for Indonesia. Table 2 on page 14 correctly shows this figure at \$4.2 million.

See comment 15.

- Page 13, Table 1: U.S. Allocations to Security Forces in the Philippines Fiscal Years 2001-2004 should reflect that ATA allocations were \$7.8 million (vice \$1.9 million). Under the heading “Examples of how

Assistance Was Used,” the entry should read “Provided training in crisis response, hostage negotiation, terrorist crime scene investigation, financial underpinnings of terrorism, vital installation security, post-blast investigation, cyber-terrorism investigation, and mass casualty medical issues.”

See comment 15.

- Page 14, Table 2: U.S. Allocations to Security Forces in Indonesia Fiscal Years 2001-2004, ATA allocations were \$19.1 million (vice \$14.8 million).

See comment 15.

- Page 15, Table 3: U.S. Allocations to Security Forces in Thailand, Fiscal Years 2001-2004, should have an entry for ATA with an allocation of \$4.2 million, and under the heading “Examples of How Assistance Was Used,” the following should be added: “Training provided in airport security management, officer survival, hostage negotiation, surveillance detection, crisis management, explosive incident countermeasures, mass transit security, explosive detector dogs and handlers, and cyber-terrorism investigation.”

See comment 16.

- Page 16, line 5: “We found similar outcomes for DoD vetting in the other two countries” contradicts table 5 on page 19 which shows vetting was completed for 100 percent of the DoD sample for those two countries.
- Page 17, second paragraph, second to last sentence is incorrect. Replace “, as well.” with “only when the individual is the unit to be trained (i.e. for IMET courses).”

See comment 17.

- Page 17 states that post officials, State headquarters officials, and State guidance all have the same understanding of vetting procedures and who is responsible at each step. This contradicts the overall finding that the Department did not issue sufficiently clear guidance on vetting procedures.

See comment 18.

- Page 17: In Jakarta, it is not the responsibility of the political section to obtain clearances from all other sections but that of the initiating office to obtain clearances from other offices i.e. Political, Regional Affairs, Consular (if the person is traveling), and RSO and keep the record of receiving such clearances.

See comment 19.

- Page 18, Table 4, footnote ^b: Clarification that the GAO report indicates that about 300 in-country ATA trainees from Thailand were not vetted. Those not vetted were participants in the WMD First Responder seminar, the Mail Security course, and some Cyber-Terrorism courses. Appropriate human rights vetting procedures are documented for all other ATA training events in Thailand.

See comment 20.

- Page 19, Table 5: GAO Sample of Trainees for Vetting at Three Posts, Fiscal Years 2001-2004 indicates that 210 trainees were identified by Indonesia. ATA records indicate 705 students received ATA training from 2001 through 2004. This table does not identify the year of training nor reflect the specific organization responsible for the delivery of the training. Additionally, the “unit” from which students were selected is unclear.

See comment 21.

- Page 20 and summary: When the Department informed Embassy Jakarta that BRIMOB personnel could not be trained in November 2003, ICITAP immediately ceased training. It should be noted that the training was focused on encouraging more professional, accountable behavior.
- Page 31: The report states that ATA is rated as “effective,” and the “Security Assistance Programs to the Western Hemisphere” are rated as “moderately effective.” This is somewhat confusing, because ATA is rated based on its organization-wide performance, not effectiveness geographically. It also implies a relationship between ATA and WHA Security Assistance that we are not sure was intended.

See comment 15.

- Page 40, Table 7: In Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) under “ATA by country (fiscal years 2001 to 2004)” the entry should read “Indonesia: \$19,097,363 (vice \$14,786,000) Philippines: \$7,806,000 (vice \$1,939,000) and Thailand: \$4,250,000 (vice \$0).”

National Security Assistance Strategy

See comment 7.

- Page 26: The Report’s assertion that State’s National Security Assistance Strategy addresses only two objectives of the Security Assistance Act of 2000 is based on incomplete information. The assessment was made after reviewing briefing slides used during the briefing, and does not take into consideration the accompanying verbal presentation.

See comment 22.

- Page 28: The claim that State's Security Assistance Strategy is not multiyear is incorrect. The Bureau Performance Plans (BPPs) are multi-year plans. The 5th slide (pg. 46) of the presentation identifies that BPPs outline activities for two fiscal years (since increased to three fiscal years) in the future. When added to programs being executed during the current year, the result is a four year plan.

See comment 23.

- Page 28: The claims that State's Security Assistance Strategy is neither coordinated with the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, nor prepared in consultation with appropriate agencies are incorrect. Representatives from OSD, the Joint Staff and the regional combatant commanders are active participants in State's annual Security Assistance Roundtables, where security assistance goals and objectives are developed and fine-tuned. Roundtable participants maintain consistent communication throughout the year as the programs are executed, and OSD's Principal Director for Strategy participated in the presentation to Congress.

See comment 6.

- Page 29: The claims that State's Security Assistance Strategy does not include primary and secondary security objectives for individual countries, resource allocations to accomplish primary and secondary objectives, how security assistance programs are combined at the country level, and how programs are coordinated with other USG agencies are incorrect. All of these aspects were covered verbally in the presentation as the briefer discussed slides 6 through 11 and 13.

The following are GAO's comments on the Department of State letter dated July 12, 2005.

GAO Comments

1. State commented that the Leahy provisions apply only to units, not individuals, of foreign security forces, and said that applying human rights restrictions at the individual level is a matter of policy. State also asserted that it takes additional measures to avoid the provision of U.S. assistance to individuals suspected of gross human rights violations, whether inside or outside the security unit setting. However, our work showed that State's policy is not being effectively implemented. We found that an estimated 6,900 individuals received U.S. training assistance without any evidence that they had first been vetted for gross violations of human rights. Therefore, we recommended in the report that State strengthen its management controls to meet its stated policy goal of not providing U.S. assistance to suspected gross human rights violators.
2. State said that U.S. embassies in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand reviewed their human rights vetting procedures and brought them into compliance with Department guidance. We agree that embassies in Manila and Jakarta wrote their human rights vetting procedures during the course of our review to bring them into compliance with State guidance. However, Embassy Bangkok does not have written procedures and is not in compliance with State guidelines. More importantly, State lacks a system for monitoring compliance with its guidelines. As discussed in our report, we found that no headquarters office within State is currently charged with the responsibility of monitoring the posts' compliance with State's human rights vetting procedures and recommended that such a monitoring mechanism be established to verify that these procedures are being carried out properly. Such a system would help eliminate the major gaps in vetting we found at the three posts we visited.

State further commented that the State-run International Law Enforcement Academies and Philippines ATA programs have been fully incorporated in human rights vetting procedures since 1999. However, this comment is not relevant to our main finding that we found no evidence that about 6,900 foreign security forces were vetted for human rights concerns before receiving U.S. law enforcement training under ICITAP.

3. State acknowledged the need for continued improvement, especially concerning better oversight of the implementation of posts' procedures. It noted that some oversight is provided through the periodic Inspector General inspections. State said that it purposely allows the posts flexibility in deciding vetting guidelines. We contacted the State Inspector General and found that their periodic post inspections have not included assessments of State's human rights vetting process at any of the three posts. We found that State had conducted an inspection at only one post--Embassy Bangkok--between fiscal years 2001 through 2004.
4. We disagree with State's comments that (1) central oversight of posts' compliance with vetting requirements in a single office is not needed, and (2) its new database system will mitigate the need for centralization in one bureau. As stated in our report, no office within State is charged with the overall responsibility of monitoring posts' compliance with human rights vetting requirements, which has led to lapses in the vetting process across all three posts. Currently, four different bureaus within State share some responsibility for implementing these requirements. This has resulted in confusion in the field and gaps in implementing departmental vetting policies. State's guidance issued to the posts between 1997 through 2005 did not assign this role and responsibility to any one office. A central focal point would help identify instances where a post was not complying with required procedures or instances where confusion about requirements existed. The new database, alone, will not solve the vetting problems we identified or replace the need for designating an office with the express responsibility of monitoring how posts implement their human rights vetting requirements.
5. We disagree with State's statement that our decision to include a full range of programs and activities supporting foreign military and police forces within the scope of our review undermined our assessment of State's compliance with the Security Assistance Act. As officials with State's Bureau of Legal Affairs repeatedly stated, there is no statutory definition of "security assistance," or even a commonly agreed-upon definition within the federal government. In the absence of a legal definition, and for the purposes of our report, we defined security assistance as U.S. government assistance to train and equip foreign security forces (military and police). Although State officials indicated that it traditionally considers security assistance to include FMF, IMET, EDA, and PKO programs, the Security Assistance Act of 2002 states

that FMF, IMET and EDA *as well as other similar training programs to foreign security forces* shall be included in State's briefing on the strategy. It will be difficult for State to craft a comprehensive security assistance strategy, as called for in our report, without including at least the 12 related programs and activities described in our report.

6. We disagree that the absence of further requests for a briefing on the national security assistance strategy somehow changed the intention of the Security Assistance Act of 2000 to have an annual report to Congress. The Security Assistance Act of 2000 urged State to provide an annual strategy while the 2002 act mandated a status briefing on the development of that strategy. We understand that State fulfilled its requirement to brief the committees on the progress of the strategy, as called for in the 2002 act, but we disagree that a lack of request for additional briefings altered the intention of the 2000 act, which urged State to provide an annual National Security Assistance Strategy to Congress.
7. The briefing was a good first step, but a detailed written plan is needed for wider distribution, and for providing documentation for tracking progress in moving forward.
8. We agree with State's observation that our report does not include information about the Global Affairs Dashboard pilot project, which State said has the potential to become a useful tool for security assistance strategic planning. Although we were not informed in the course of our review of the Global Dashboard, which has yet to be developed and deployed, we support all State efforts to develop better strategic planning tools for U.S. security assistance programs. We have revised the report to reflect this new information.
9. We have made changes in the body of the report to reflect State's comment that the draft incorrectly referred to IMET and FMF as DOD programs, when they are Foreign Operations Appropriations Act-funded programs.
10. The draft report already reflected the distinction between State policy and the law.
11. We have updated the report to reflect State's comment.

12. We agree with State's comment that Embassy Manila had written procedures for human rights vetting prior to 2004 and made changes in the report to reflect this comment. However, we disagree with State's comment that Embassy Manila provided us with all relevant documents during our visit in March 2005, including an October 2000 cable outlining post human rights vetting procedures. In fact, the post provided us only with the procedures in effect since late 2004.
13. We have revised the graphic to reflect State's comment that no EDA articles were transferred to Indonesia.
14. We have revised the graphic to correct the value for CTFP.
15. State commented that ATA allocations should be \$7.8 million, rather than \$1.9 million, for the Philippines; \$19.1 million, rather than \$14.8 million, for Indonesia; and \$4.2 million, rather than zero, for Thailand. In subsequent discussions with State officials, they said that these figures represent "either obligations or expenditures," and not allocations, as we requested. We could not verify the numbers that they provided through agency comments and State was not able to provide us with corrected values for the allocations. As a result, we made no changes to the report and reported the available ATA country allocations as presented in State's Congressional Budget Justifications.
16. We revised our report language to reflect State's comment.
17. State misinterpreted our generic description of the human rights vetting process, which was not intended to imply that all State officials share a common understanding of vetting policies and procedures. During our fieldwork at the three posts, we found major gaps in the implementation of State's vetting procedures.
18. We have changed the report to reflect State's comment that it is the responsibility of the initiating office in Jakarta, not the political section, to obtain clearances from all other sections.
19. State asserts that some of the 300 ATA in-country trainees in Thailand who were not vetted were not members of the security forces and thus should be excluded from the table. However, we carefully separated out non-security forces from our review before assessing compliance with human rights vetting procedures. Our numbers were based on our file review in Embassy Bangkok and discussion with the ATA Program

Director. This analysis showed that of 708 ATA trainees between 2001 and 2004; 144 were security forces sent to the United States, 321 were security forces trained in Thailand, but not vetted; and 243 were non-security forces trained in Thailand for whom vetting was not required.

20. We disagree with State's comment that the number of Indonesian trainees from 2001 through 2004 is 705. We revised the incorrect figure (210) in our report to reflect the number (297) provided by the post in its "DS/ATA Indonesia Summary Sheet."
21. We disagree with State's comment that we may be implying a relationship between the ATA program and all security assistance programs to the western hemisphere, based on our discussion of PART ratings in our draft report. We did not intend to imply a relationship between the two programs. As stated in our draft report, the 2004 PART conducted two separate reviews. One review was for the ATA program, which it rated as "effective." The other review was for all security assistance programs to the Western Hemisphere, which were rated as "moderately effective."
22. State contends that the National Security Assistance Strategy is a multiyear plan because the Bureau Performance Plans are multiyear documents. The Bureau Performance Plans are different documents and serve a different purpose as indicated in our report. We acknowledge in the report that the Bureau Performance Plans are consistent with the National Security Strategy of the United States, and to some extent address how combining resources and programs will achieve regional goals as called for in the act. However, the Bureau Performance Plans do not constitute a National Security Assistance Strategy.
23. State said that it coordinated development of the National Security Assistance Strategy with the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and other appropriate agencies. We acknowledge that State's annual roundtables and other communications are useful in developing and "fine-tuning" security assistance goals and objectives. However, we did not find anyone in those offices who participated in developing the National Security Assistance Strategy—the briefing slides, outline, and oral presentation. One State official earlier had said that DOD officials were involved only in presenting a briefing on EDA as part of State's Strategy briefing and a separate briefing on DOD's security cooperation efforts.

GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contact

Joseph A. Christoff (202) 512-8979

Staff Acknowledgments

In addition to the individual named above, Stephen M. Lord, Assistant Director; Jeffrey D. Phillips; Ann M. Ulrich; Jonathan Ban; Matthew Helm; Lynn Cothorn; Mary Moutsos; and Sidney Schwartz made key contributions to this report.

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