



DSCA | MISSION SETS

The mission of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) is wide-ranging, encompassing Defense Trade and Arms Transfers, Institutional Capacity Building, International Military Training and Education, Humanitarian Assistance, and Security Cooperation Workforce Development. Since its inception in 1971, DSCA has been relied upon to lead the U.S. Security Cooperation enterprise to help solve complex U.S. defense and foreign policy challenges.



Defense Trade and Arms Transfers

Defense trade and arms transfers primarily defined DSCA's inception and remain a critical function. Over the years, this mission set has transformed and expanded as a defense and foreign policy tool of first resort, integrating Department of State and Department of Defense (DoD) programs, and informed by Congressional legislation and oversight.

DSCA defines defense trade and arms transfers as the transfer of defense articles and services via sale, lease, or grant, in furtherance of national security and foreign policy objectives. This includes the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program, as well as programs such as State Department's Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and Excess Defense Articles (EDA) and DoD's training and equipping and institutional capacity-building activities, all designed to enable U.S. allies and partner nations to develop and sustain capabilities to respond to shared challenges.

The Arms Export Control Act of 1976 provides current legal authority and general rules for conducting FMS, commercial sales of defense articles, defense services, and training. FMS sales to allies and partner nations averaged about \$2 billion per year throughout the 1960s. In Fiscal Year 2022, the United States sold or transferred as grant \$51.9 billion in defense articles and services, with a three-year rolling average of \$45.8 billion.

Defense trade and arms transfers, as well as related programs, have grown larger and more complex in the aftermath of World War II, aligned to emerging threats and policies. However, the overall rationale remains the same: the development and execution of effective and enduring U.S. Security Cooperation programs and partnerships that enable the United States and its allies and partner nations to respond to shared challenges.



Institutional Capacity Building

Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) programs, overseen by DSCA, encompass U.S. Security Cooperation activities that directly support U.S. ally and partner nation efforts to improve security sector governance and core management competencies necessary to effectively and responsibly achieve shared security objectives.

ICB has become an increasingly important aspect of the U.S. approach to Security Cooperation, posturing U.S. allies and partner nations to be successful in fulfilling a mutually-agreed upon security role through the strengthening of their policy and strategy; legal authorities and frameworks; processes and management systems; resourcing systems; doctrine, or operational concepts; and command and control of their forces.

Applying a full-spectrum approach is a strategic advantage for DoD. This approach builds effective alliances and partnerships to achieve shared results, while promoting American values and respect for international norms. These include the core values of respect for human rights, the rule of law and law of armed conflict, democratic principles, civilian control of the military and civil-military relations, civilian harm mitigation, and anti-corruption.

ICB, as a tool of U.S. Security Cooperation, is core to enabling preparedness, deterring threats, and prevailing in the renewed era of strategic competition.



International Military Training and Education

International military training and education programs are an important element of U.S. Security Cooperation relationships, strengthening our alliances and attracting new partners. DoD has offered both skill-focused training and graduate-level education to international military students for more than 50 years. This function was one of the original tasks overseen by DSCA at its inception and remains a core component of the Agency's work today.

Of the 78,000 international military students trained annually by the United States, approximately 24,000 received that training in the United States. Conducted at U.S. military institutions, these programs also enable cultural exchanges with local communities and exposure to U.S. history while those students attend courses.

DSCA's work in international military training and education supports and builds intellectual interoperability between the United States and its allies and partner nations. These programs are foundational to creating and maintaining long-term relationships with personnel who often become leaders that provide access and influence at the highest levels of their nation's military decision-making.





Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

Humanitarian Assistance (HA) programs support U.S. military forces by promoting peace and stability in regions of tension and by providing aid and relief in the aftermath of natural or manmade disasters. DoD conducts HA to relieve or reduce endemic conditions such as human suffering, disease, hunger, privation, and the adverse effects of unexploded explosive ordnance, particularly in regions where humanitarian needs may pose major challenges to stability, prosperity, and respect for universal human values.

DSCA's Humanitarian Assistance, Disaster Relief, and Mine Action team provides oversight and executes program management over DoD HA activities. These programs are funded by the Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid (OHDACA) appropriation, first created in 1996. OHDACA funding enables five HA activities that equip, train, and provide essential services to U.S. allies and partner nations in need.

The Humanitarian Assistance, Humanitarian Mine Action, Excess Property, and Humanitarian Assistance Transportation programs build the capacity of U.S. allied and partner nation governments to provide essential humanitarian services. Foreign Disaster Relief activities support the broader U.S. government's immediate response to international disasters by providing DoD-unique capabilities that deliver life-saving assistance. Ultimately, OHDACA-funded activities aim to save lives, avert crises, and strengthen U.S. Security Cooperation relationships with U.S. allies and partner nations.

The DoD HA programs are a unique U.S. Security Cooperation tool enabling Geographic Combatant Commanders to engage with allied and partner nation civilian authorities, and build allied and partner nation capacity to provide essential humanitarian services to their populations, which strengthen DoD alliances with allied and partner nation governments and populations.



Defense Security Cooperation University/ Workforce Development

To meet the current and future global U.S. Security Cooperation mission, the Defense Security Cooperation University (DSCU), founded in September 2019, delivers the education, training, research and workforce analysis required to develop an agile, certified, and experienced U.S. Security Cooperation workforce. Additionally, DSCU implements Institutional Capacity Building, Security Cooperation education, and related programs and initiatives with U.S. allies and partner nations.

DSCU is DoD's center of intellectual life for U.S. Security Cooperation and aspires to be the indispensable institution for Security Cooperation knowledge and practice. DSCU is comprised of its headquarters in the National Capital Region (NCR), which consists of the Strategic Workforce Programs Directorate, (focused on the Security Cooperation Workforce Development Program and Security Cooperation Organization/Officer (SCO) Management Program), the ICB Directorate (focused on the planning, resourcing and Congressional notification of all ICB activities), the College of Security Cooperation Studies (focused on higher-level Security Cooperation education as well as functional and regional studies) and the Research, Analysis and Lessons Learned

Institute (RALLI), which advances the study of Security Cooperation through applied research and critical inquiry. Also in the NCR is DSCU's International Military Training and Education Division that develops and manages programs and implements policies for Title 10 and 22-supported training and education activities.

DSCU also has two implementation divisions which encompass the Defense Institute of International Legal Studies (DIILS) in Newport, Rhode Island and the Institute for Security Governance (ISG) in Monterey, California, as well as DSCU's main school house in Dayton, Ohio, the School of Security Cooperation Studies (SSCS). SSCS supports DSCA's mission of training, educating, and providing for the long-term development of the Security Cooperation workforce.

The DSCU team of teams works across functional areas to create synergies that benefit students, strategic partners, and other external stakeholders. An agile mindset and desire to innovate in response to the real-world challenges and requirements of those the university serves characterizes DSCU's approach to the mission and its constant collaboration with the rest of DSCA.



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