

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

USSOCOM

USSOCOM, one of nine unified commands in the U.S. military's combatant command structure, is composed of Army, Navy, and Air Force SOF. USSOCOM's mission is to support the geographic CINCs, ambassadors and their country teams, and other government agencies by preparing SOF to successfully conduct special operations, including CA and PSYOP.

The commander in chief of USSOCOM (USCINCSOC) has two roles. In his capacity as a supporting CINC, he provides trained and ready SOF. In his role as a supported CINC, the USCINCSOC must be prepared to exercise command of selected special operations missions when directed by the NCA.

Congress mandated the creation of USSOCOM in 1987 to correct serious deficiencies in the ability of the United States to conduct special operations and engage in low-intensity conflict activities. The command was assigned many service-like responsibilities, including training, ensuring combat readiness, monitoring personnel promotions and assignments, and developing and acquiring SOF-peculiar equipment. USSOCOM was also given responsibility for managing a separate major force program (MFP), MFP-11, which ensures the SOF program has visibility at the Department of Defense and congressional levels.



Tail gunner on MH-53J Pave Low helicopter employs suppressive fire support tactics with 7.62mm minigun.

These last two tasks give USSOCOM great flexibility in training, equipping, and employing its forces. USCINCSOC is the sole unified commander with responsibility for planning, programming, and budgeting of military forces. In addition, he has the authority similar to that of a service chief for the development and acquisition of special operations-peculiar equipment, materials, supplies, and services. In short, he is the only CINC with a checkbook.

Under the same legislation that created USSOCOM, Congress also established the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD(SO/LIC)) as the policy and resource focal point for all special operations and low-intensity conflict activities of the Department of Defense. Aided by these reforms, enormous improvements in the readiness and capabilities of our nation's special operations forces were made.

USSOCOM's mission can be effectively accomplished only with the support of the Army, Navy, and Air Force who provide quality personnel, common equipment, base operations support, logistical sustainment, and core skills training. This support allows USCINCSOC to focus on SOF-specific training and equipment, as well as the integration of SOF into the entire range of military operations.



A Ranger from the 75th Ranger Regiment takes aim during training.

With only 1.3 percent of the Department of Defense budget, SOF provide the United States with a combat-ready, highly-capable, and flexible force — a force that is structured, manned, equipped, and trained to meet current and future security challenges in support of national defense objectives.

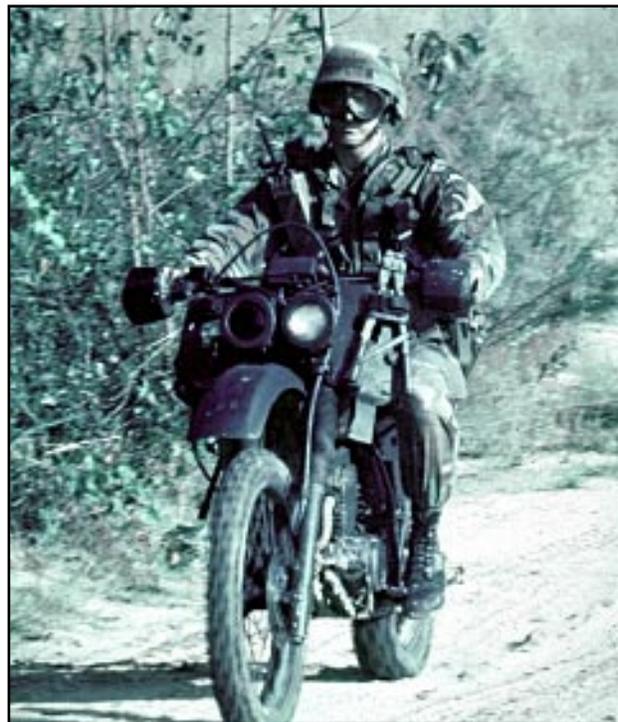
Service Component Commands

The geographic CINCs identify the forces necessary to accomplish the missions assigned within their areas of responsibility (AOR). These requirements provide the guidance that drives the development capabilities and force structure. All active and reserve Army, Navy, and Air Force SOF based in the United States are assigned to USSOCOM.

USSOCOM's service component commands are the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, the Naval Special Warfare Command, and the Air Force Special Operations Command. The Joint Special Operations Command is assigned as a sub-unified command of USSOCOM. Component command organization and force structure are presented in detail in Appendix B.

The U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC). The U.S. Army Special Operations Command, headquartered at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, commands active and U.S. Army Reserve special operations forces. USASOC is responsible to USSOCOM for the readiness of Special Forces (SF), Rangers, and special operations aviation, CA, and PSYOP units for deployment to unified combatant commands around the world.

The Naval Special Warfare Command (NAVSPECWARCOM). The Naval Special Warfare Command, located in Coronado, California, is responsible to USSOCOM for the readiness



An AFSOC combat controller uses a motorcycle for high-speed mobility on a drop zone.

of active and reserve naval special warfare (NSW) forces. NSW Group ONE and Special Boat Squadron ONE in Coronado, California and NSW Group TWO and Special Boat Squadron TWO in Little Creek, Virginia, are the major operational components of NAVSPECWARCOM.

The U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC). The Air Force Special Operations Command, located at Hurlburt Field, Florida, is responsible to USSOCOM for the readiness of active, Air Force Reserve, and Air National Guard SOF for worldwide deployment. Three special operations wings, two special operations groups, and one special tactics group are assigned to AFSOC.

The Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC). The Joint Special Operations Command was established in 1980 and is located at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. JSOC is a joint headquarters designed to study special operations requirements and techniques; ensure interoperability and equipment standardization; plan and conduct joint special operations exercises and training; and develop joint special operations tactics.

Theater Assets

Theater Special Operations Commands.

The theater special operations command (SOC), established as a sub-unified command of the combatant unified commands, is the geographic CINC's source of expertise in all areas of special operations, providing the CINC with a separate element to plan and control the employment of joint SOF in military operations. Theater SOCs normally exercise operational control of SOF (except civil affairs and psychological operations) within each geographic CINC's area of responsibility. Additionally, the SOCs can provide the nucleus for the establishment of a joint special operations task force (JSOTF) or joint task force when formed.

The theater SOC commander is responsible to the geographic CINC for planning and



A SEAL team member talks with locals after training at the Takama Waterfront, Guyana, in support of exercise Tradewinds 99.

conducting joint special operations in the theater, ensuring that SOF capabilities are matched to mission requirements, exercising operational control of SOF for joint special operations, and advising the CINC and component commanders in theater on the proper employment of SOF. While the USCINCSOC provides funding and personnel for the SOCs, each SOC reports directly to the geographic CINC.

Operational experience, both in peace and war, indicates that SOF are most effective when closely integrated into campaign plans. The SOCs' efforts have paid great dividends in this regard. The result is the full integration of SOF into theater and country peacetime plans, as well as the geographic CINCs' war plans. The key role of the theater SOCs and the recent accomplishments of SOF in the theaters are highlighted in the next section of this document.

CA and PSYOP Support to Geographic CINCs. CA and PSYOP are SOF principal missions, but their functional command and control relationships are structured to support

both special operations and conventional forces. USSOCOM provides forward-deployed CA and PSYOP support to the geographic CINCs to accomplish planning and coordination for forward presence, peacetime support, contingency, and wartime operations.

CA support provided to combatant commanders comes from both the active and reserve components. Although the reserve component comprises approximately 90 percent of the total CA force, the support offered by all CA forces is integrated into theater engagement and contingency and operational planning.

PSYOP support to geographic CINCs is vital to attaining theater objectives. Normally located on the geographic CINC's staff, PSYOP forward liaison detachments (FLDs) are an important resource in planning politically sensitive, yet invaluable, PSYOP. Currently the only PSYOP group in the active component force structure, the 4th PSYOP Group (Airborne), provides FLDs to USEUCOM, USPACOM, USSOUTHCOM, and United Nations Command (Korea).



Soldier from 96th Civil Affairs Battalion passes out candy to refugee children at a Greek refugee camp in Albania.