Defense Language Program

Defense Language Office Overview

Presented to the Interagency Language Roundtable

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The Need for Language & Cultural Transformation

Building competencies for our 21st Century Total Force

DoD must be able to meet the demands of —

- Global War on Terror/Long War
- Irregular Warfare
- Increased potential conflict zones
- Pursuing regional stability
- Building coalitions
- Humanitarian relief
- Transitioning to a robust expeditionary force
Language and Culture Transformation

Changing the organizational DNA

- Language Transformation Roadmap established overarching goals and supporting actions
  - Directed by Strategic Planning Guidance (FY 2006-2011)
  - Established 4 goals with 43 supporting actions
    1. Create Foundational Language & Regional Expertise
    2. Create the Capacity to Surge
    3. Establish Higher Levels of Proficiency in the Language Professional Cadre
    4. Expand & Improve Foreign Area Officer Corps
      - Implementation timeline 2005 – 2008. . .86% complete

- Other Initiatives that enhanced Language & Culture Transformation
  - 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review
  - DoD “Top 25” Transformation Priorities
  - National Strategic Language Initiative
Defense Language Program Relationships

USD (Personnel & Readiness)

DUSD (PLANS)/DoD Senior Language Authority

Defense Language Office

Defense Language Steering Committee

Defense Language Action Panel

Other Relationships
- Dept of State
- Dept of Education
- Office of Director of National Intelligence
- Foreign Language Executive Committee
- Interagency Language Roundtable
- Center for Advanced Study of Language / National Center for Language and Culture Research
- Foreign Language Training Center-Europe

Key Stake Holders
- Joint Staff
- Services
- Combatant Commands
- Defense Agencies
- OSD Staff
- Defense Field Activities

DoD Working Groups
- Technology
- Irregular Warfare
- Building Partnership Capacity
- Stability, Security, Transition & Reconstruction

Defense Language Testing Advisory Board

Defense Language Testing Requirements Board

• National Security Education Program
• Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center
• Defense Language Institute English Language Center

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Direct
Collaborative
Defining assets and needs — filling the gaps…

- Identifying current capability through self-reported screening
  - Over 250K members report foreign language skills…new members now screened during accession or hiring
  - 81% have skills in strategic languages — 34% when Spanish factored out
  - New language assets identified — over 12,000 Arabic, Dari, and Pashto

- Determining language and regional expertise requirements
  - Updating doctrine, policy, and planning guidance to include language and regional expertise
  - Defining needs — currently identified over 140K requirements
  - Refining validation process to ensure adequate sourcing

- Language Readiness Index (LRI) matches assets to needs
  - Tied directly to Defense Readiness Reporting System (DRRS)
  - Highlights potential gaps and shortfalls…allows risk assessment prior to action
  - Targets all assets, not just people in language or regional expertise-required specialties or positions
Building language as a core competency

- **Established Service heritage-recruiting plans**
  - Services developed heritage-recruiting plans
  - Army 09L Interpreter/Translator Program became a permanent program in 2006; ~700 heritage speaking soldiers graduated, ~150 in training pipeline
  - Civilian recruiting efforts include: reenergized branding and marketing materials; revamped “Go Defense” website
  - DoD and Intel community partnering to reduce clearance processing barriers

- **Encouraging pre-accession language and culture study**
  - Service academies now require 4 semesters of foreign language study for non-technical degree-seeking cadets/midshipmen
  - Service academies and ROTC increased study aboard opportunities; foreign academy exchange and summer immersion programs offered in 40 countries; exchanges increased from 24 to 100 per academic year
  - Proposed legislative language to allow incentives for language study by ROTC students
Building foundational knowledge

- **Enhancing Education and Training**
  - Strengthen language instruction; graduation goal 2+/2+/2 (Reading/Listening/Speaking) by 2011
  - Embedding culture in all language training and Professional Military Education
  - Using technology to enhance learning — streaming video, iPod™

- **Providing “just-in-time” training**
  - Deployed computer-based sustainment training
  - Shipped ~ 900,000 Language Survival Kits to deployed units
  - Conducted ~ 440 pre-deployment training events since 2001
  - Trained 6,000+ deploying “Iraqi Transition Team” soldiers in basic Arabic skills

- **Strengthening the Defense Language Testing System**
  - Requiring language aptitude screening for all accessions
  - Implemented the next generation of language proficiency tests — uses authentic material to more accurately reflect language nuances
  - Converting tests to a web-delivered format: currently offered in 48 languages — additional 26 by 2011; available at 450+ military locations
Building capability today to meet the unexpected . . . tomorrow

- **Building Defense Language Volunteer Program**
  - Civilian data base launched April 2008
  - Military data base scheduled for late 2008
  - Data bases capture volunteers only

- **Developed a 4-phase plan to meet emerging needs**
  - Building new language tests to identify skills
  - Producing web-delivered materials to refresh proficiency
  - Developing resident short courses to increase proficiency
  - Creating basic course curricula (to keep on-the-shelf) to ramp-up quickly
Identifying tasks and missions requiring higher proficiency levels
- Established 3/3/3 as a goal for language professionals
- Reviewing military billets to accurately reflect language needs
- Zero-based civilian billet review validated language positions

Implementing training and career management plans to achieve and sustain higher proficiency levels
- Strengthened DoD Joint Foreign Area Officer Program with improved selection, training, and utilization for the more than 1,600 members who are qualified, designated, or in training
- Studying linguist career path to improve utilization and retention
- Investing in language sustainment programs

Using Foreign Language Proficiency Bonus to encourage and sustain change
- Incentivizing personnel to self-report, maintain, and improve their skills
- Authorized up to $1,000 per month for high-proficiency in strategic languages
- NSPS allows payment for civilians not in language billets
Shifted language training focal point for officers to pre-accession

- Directed the ROTC Language and Culture Grant Program
  - Encourages schools to provide ROTC students opportunities to study languages/cultures through innovative learning techniques
  - Awarding up to 50 ROTC schools three-year grants FY2007-2013
- Expanded cultural immersion opportunities and increased study in key languages at Service Academies; developed enrollment requirements in foreign languages for non-technical cadets and midshipmen
- Embedded Cultural and Regional training in officer Professional Military Education — expanding to enlisted courses as well

Supported sustainment training

- Strengthen ongoing Cultural & Regional Training
- Using satellite technology for language maintenance
- Increased Pre-deployment training
DOD Transformation priorities: strengthen language and culture

- DoD Transformation priority milestones emphasize cultural needs
- Milestones to be completed by December 2008
  1. Publish a DoD Regional/Cultural Expertise White Paper
  2. Incorporate language and culture into doctrine and policy
  3. Embed cultural awareness in PME, and accession & pre-deployment training
  4. Establish a Language Readiness Index
  5. Sponsor a National Cultural Conference/Roundtable
  6. Continue to engage in National Agenda to increase language capability
  7. Establish FY10 funding plan for cultural programs

- Success requires an integrated approach as actions — recommendations are interdependent
Moving ahead while evaluating progress made. . .

- Identify the different levels of support to meet specialized vs. general purpose needs
- Increase opportunities for English training to our partners & allies to help in Building Partnership Capacity
- Map “Way Ahead”: continue emphasis on language while strengthening regional and cultural competencies

and the journey continues...
QUESTIONS?

Deutsch

Italiano

中国語

Español

한국어