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OF THE AIR FORCE**

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**Operations Support**

**USAF ATTACHÉ PROGRAM**



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This publication implements Air Force Policy Directive 16-1, *Security Cooperation*. It provides specific guidance for establishing and sustaining the Air Force Attaché Program. This AFI applies to all regular and Air Force Reserve (AFR) personnel involved in the United States Air Force (USAF) Attaché Program. This publication does not apply to the Air National Guard. This AFI may not be supplemented at any level. Send all recommended changes or comments about this publication to the Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force, International Affairs, Policy, Programs and Strategy Directorate, International Airmen Division (SAF/IAPA), 1080 Air Force-Pentagon, Washington DC 20330 or email at [usaf.pentagon.saf-ia.mbx.saf-iapa-attache-workflow@mail.mil](mailto:usaf.pentagon.saf-ia.mbx.saf-iapa-attache-workflow@mail.mil), through appropriate channels, using AF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*. Route AF Form 847s from the field through Major Command publications/forms managers. Also, submit waiver requests for requirements contained in this instruction to SAF/IAPA, using the same routing chain. Ensure all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained in accordance with Air Force Manual 33-363, Management of Records, and disposed of in accordance with the Air Force Records Disposition Schedule located in the Air Force Records Information Management System.

**SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

This document contains minor administrative changes to include renaming Regional Affairs Strategist to Foreign Affairs Officer, removing duplicate instructions and updating references.

## Chapter 1

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

**1.1. Overview.** The Department of Defense (DoD) Defense Attaché Service (DAS) is administered by the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). The Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force, International Affairs (SAF/IA) is responsible for the oversight and program management of the USAF Attaché Program. SAF/IAPA manages the screening, selection, assignment, and support for regular Air Force officer and enlisted personnel filling DAS positions in U.S. Embassies around the world. DIA also maintains Air Force Reserve Attaché and operations support positions in the DAS as Individual Mobilization Augmentees of DIAs joint reserve unit.

**1.2. Officer Positions.** Attaché positions include Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché (SDO/DATT), Air Attaché (AIRA), and Assistant Air Attaché (A/AIRA). Attachés are selected from most line officer career specialties and generally have an operations background. In addition, foreign language skills, experience in the region, and working in or with the intelligence community are all highly desired.

#### **1.3. Enlisted Positions.**

1.3.1. Attaché support positions include Operations Coordinator (OPSCO); Operations Non-Commissioned Officer (OPSNCO); and Airborne Mission Technician (AMT). They are special-duty positions filled by enlisted personnel in the grade of E-5 through E-9, who manage all operational support aspects of the Defense Attaché Office mission. Attaché support duties include managing logistics and administrative support; executing budget requirements; working country, personnel, aircraft, and ship clearances; supervising foreign national office staff; and direct support of VIP visits.

1.3.2. Attaché support personnel need to be self-starters who are flexible, persuasive, and persistent.

1.3.3. Attaché support duty is open to all Air Force Specialty Codes (AFSC), capitalizing on the wide range of professional expertise in the USAF enlisted corps.

**1.4. Screening and Selection.** As a high visibility, special-duty assignment, the selection process for DAS duty is very thorough. Screening typically starts two to three years prior to the required reporting date on station. Candidates are nominated by the Air Force Personnel Center, the Air Force Colonels Management Office (AF/CVXO), or the Air Force Chief Master Sergeant Management Office (AF/CVXE) to SAF/IAPA. The process includes extensive documentation requirements, interviews, and (for attachés only) approval by an USAF selection panel. The selection panel typically consists of representatives from SAF/IA, Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance and Cyber Effects Operations (AF/A2/6) and DIA. Note: General officer attaché screening and selection is accomplished by the Air Force General Officer Management Office (AF/CVXG).

**1.5. Attaché Training.** Preparation of attaché and attaché-support designees for duty in the DAS normally involves a lengthy training period including Joint Military Attaché School (JMAS), language training, State Department security training, the Defense Institute of Security Cooperation Studies, and for some, C-12 aircraft qualification training. Spouses of attaché and attaché-support designees may also attend formal language training and should attend the JMAS spouse orientation course. U.S. citizenship is a requirement for spouse attendance at JMAS.

## Chapter 2

### PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

**2.1. General Eligibility Requirements.** Airmen are considered eligible if they are qualified in a primary Air Force career specialty, remain eligible for worldwide deployment or assignment, and are eligible for security clearance upgrades.

2.1.1. Officer Requirements. Attaché duty (AFSC 16F4A) is open to Air Force officers in grades O-4 through O-8. Attaché duty is a developmental assignment for the Foreign Area Officer (FAO) career path. Therefore, officers selected through the FAO Program serve as the primary attaché candidate selection pool. See AFI 16-109, *International Affairs Specialist (IAS) Program* for more information on the IAS and FAO Program. Other pre-requisites include:

2.1.1.1. Have a record of military service that shows overall outstanding performance, competence and proficiency in the officer's primary career specialty, and the ability to work well with others.

2.1.1.2. Be a citizen of the United States and be free of any family, commercial, or other connections with the applicable country that could potentially interfere with the ability to successfully carry out the DAS assignment. Officers cannot be a dual-citizen of another country. Family members are only allowed to accompany sponsors to duty station if they qualify for U.S. Diplomatic passports.

2.1.1.3. Have a Defense Language Aptitude Battery score equal to or greater than the language training requirements for the position. Proficiency in the language of the country for which the individual is being considered, validated by a current Defense Language Proficiency Test and/or Oral Proficiency Interview is highly desired.

2.1.2. Enlisted Requirements. Attaché support duty as an OPSCO and OPSNCO is open to all enlisted career fields as a special-duty assignment in AFSC 8P100/Defense Attaché Specialist. Attaché support duty as an AMT is open to all enlisted personnel in AFSC 2A571/Aerospace Maintenance. AMT responsibilities include performing in-flight duties. Specific pre-requisites include:

2.1.2.1. Be in the grade of E-5 or above and possess a 7-skill level.

2.1.2.2. Have a record of military service that shows overall outstanding performance, competence and proficiency in the member's primary career specialty, and the ability to work well with others.

2.1.2.3. Be a citizen of the United States and be free of any family, commercial, or other connections with the applicable country that could potentially interfere with the ability to successfully carry out the DAS assignment. Non-commissioned officers (NCOs) cannot be a dual-citizen of another country. Family members are only allowed to accompany sponsors to duty station if they qualify for U.S. Diplomatic passports.

2.1.2.4. Possess or obtain a Defense Language Aptitude Battery score equal to or greater than the language training requirements for the position. Proficiency in the language of the country for which the individual is being considered, validated by a current Defense Language Proficiency Test and/or Oral Proficiency Interview is highly desired.

2.1.3. Security Requirements. All Airmen require eligibility for a Top Secret Sensitive Compartmented Information security clearance, and prior to reporting to DIA for duty, have a security clearance based on a current (within the last five years) special background investigation. Airmen are also required to pass a counterintelligence polygraph examination per the requirements of DoD Instruction 5210.91, *Polygraph and Credibility Assessment (PCA) Procedures*.

2.1.4. Medical Requirements. All Airmen and accompanying family members require a comprehensive physical examination and must gain medical and educational clearance in accordance with AFI 40-701, *Medical Support to Family Member Relocation and Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)*. Medical and educational clearances need to be re-validated and approved within 8-months of reporting to overseas assignment. AFSC 2A571 Aerospace Maintenance NCOs applying for AMT special duty assignments are also required to pass a Class 3 flight physical.

**2.2. Application and Selection.** Airmen apply for attaché duty through Air Force Personnel Center, the Colonels Group or the Chiefs Group assignments team. General officer attaché positions are typically rotational positions among the Services, and USAF nominations are handled directly between the AF/CVXG, the Joint Staff, and DIA.

**2.3. DAS Tour Curtailments, Tour Extensions, and Back-to-Back Tour Fill Rates.**

2.3.1. Curtailments. DAS assignments are sensitive, high visibility positions. Gaps of any kind affect DoD and service missions.

2.3.1.1. Attachés and attaché support personnel are expected to remain on station through their Date Eligible for Return from Overseas (DEROS).

2.3.1.2. DIA and the USAF will consider curtailment requests on a case-by-case basis but only with significant justification. Normally, Airmen will not be released from DAS assignments to attend schools, deployments, or other long-term service commitments. Airmen who volunteer for DAS duty are committing to the full tour of duty established for that assignment.

2.3.1.3. For those retiring or separating, departure prior to DEROS for terminal leave and Permissive Temporary Duty is closely scrutinized and not usually supported unless the replacement is able to arrive on station for the appropriate turnover to minimize potential gaps.

2.3.1.4. Airmen are expected to serve through their DEROS and unless restricted by a mandatory retirement date, extend an equal number of months to allow for scheduled Permissive Temporary Duty for house hunting and terminal leave.

2.3.2. Extensions. The Air Force considers tour extensions on a case-by-case basis, if also supported by DIA. Extensions for tours of 24-month or less are typically not considered unless it is programmed at the onset of attaché training. It is highly recommended that Airmen spend at least 90 days on assignment before submitting extension request. Extensions are not to exceed four years on station.

2.3.3. Back-to-Back DAS Tours. The Air Force considers back-to-back DAS tours on a case-by-case basis, if also supported by DIA. For attachés, back-to-back tours are typically not supported without significant mission justification. Attaché support personnel, with the approval of their primary career field manager, are typically considered for no more than one back-to-back tour in the DAS before returning to their primary career field, or serving in a SAF/IA headquarters assignment.

2.3.4. Due to the critical nature of the DAS to national security, the DoD, and Air Force international relations and engagements, Air Force officers and NCO billets in the DAS are considered must fill requirements.

## Chapter 3

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**3.1. Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force, International Affairs (SAF/IA).** Executes the USAF Attaché Program on behalf of the Secretary of the Air Force and serves as Functional Authority for the Attaché Program.

**3.2. Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force, International Affairs Director of Policy, Programs, and Strategy Directorate (SAF/IAP).** Manages development of policy, plans, and guidelines for USAF international programs. SAF/IAPA serves as the Functional Manager for the Attaché Program.

3.2.1. Specifically SAF/IA:

3.2.2. Performs day-to-day management and administration of the Attaché Program.

3.2.3. Coordinates USAF attaché and Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché (SDO/DATT) personnel requisition requirements with DIA.

3.2.4. Verifies attaché education, training, experience, and qualifications meet DIA personnel requisition requirements.

3.2.5. Performs screening and selection, and nominates attaché and SDO/DATT candidates in response to personnel requisitions reflecting the authorizations of the DAS Joint Manpower Program or the Security Cooperation Organization billets found on the Combatant Command Joint Manpower Programs.

3.2.6. Provides USAF personnel performance rating scheme that enables both the Geographic Combatant Commander and the Director, DIA to rate the SDO/DATT.

3.2.7. Maintains fiscal and budgetary oversight for all attaché program-related items.

3.2.8. Collaborates with SAF/IAPAs IAS Program to project future attaché language, culture, and training requirements in order to maximize utilization of FAOs for attaché duty.

3.2.9. Sponsors and coordinates regional Air Attaché (AIRA) Forums.

**3.3. Air Force Personnel Assigned to the Defense Attaché Service (DAS).**

3.3.1. Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché (SDO/DATT) responsibilities are outlined in DoDD 5205.75, *Department of Defense Operations at U.S. Embassies* and DoDI C-5105.81, *Implementing Instructions for Department of Defense Operations at U.S. Embassies*.

3.3.1.1. SDO/DATTs serve as the Defense Attaché and Chief of Security Cooperation under the joint oversight and administrative management of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence through the Directors, Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) and DIA, in coordination with the Geographic Combatant Commander.

3.3.1.2. SDO/DATTs act as in-country focal point for planning, coordinating, supporting, and executing U.S. defense issues and activities in the host nation, including Theater Security Cooperation programs under the oversight of the Geographic Combatant Commander. SDO/DATTs also serve as the principal embassy liaison with host nation defense establishments and actively participate in national security and operational policy development and coordination.

3.3.2. Attachés (SDO/DATTs, AIRAs and A/AIRAs) represent the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Geographic Combatant Commander, the Director Defense Intelligence Agency, and provide critical advice on bilateral political-military issues to the U.S. Ambassador and Country Team.

3.3.2.1. Attachés serve as embassy liaison with host-nation defense and intelligence establishments, openly observe and report developments and significant events, and actively participate in national security and operational policy development and coordination. They build and sustain key international relationships that enable DoD global operations and directly support overseas contingency operations.

3.3.3. Attachés represent the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force to host nation government officials.

3.3.3.1. In this role, Attachés are charged with developing and maintaining cooperative relationships between the USAF and the host-nation air force and establishing an environment conducive to the achievement of national objectives.

3.3.3.2. Diplomatic representational activities are to be conducted in accordance with the guidance provided by the Chief of Mission. These activities should be designed to foster relationships between the host nation and U.S. military and defense establishments and should enhance the status of the Attaché as an advisor to the Chief of Mission.

3.3.4. Specific duties required of Attachés include:

3.3.4.1. Support of official visits to the Attachés host country by U.S. Government representatives.

3.3.4.2. Processing aircraft diplomatic clearances, coordinate combined military exercises with U.S. involvement, and facilitate military-to-military contact programs.

3.3.4.3. Providing assistance for prominent recurring ceremonial functions and provide ambassadorial and dignitary escorts.

3.3.4.4. Use of quarters for representational and specific-event entertainment.

3.3.4.5. Relay of correspondence between DoD and the host nation government.

3.3.4.6. Observing and reporting military information to support U.S. national decision makers, focusing on emerging regional priorities associated with the dynamic global security environment.

3.3.4.7. Providing advice and expertise on USAF matters to the Chief of Mission and the Country Team. In this role, Attachés provide an objective view of the capabilities, limitations, and intentions of the air forces of the host nation and their impact on relations with the United States and the functions of the diplomatic mission.

3.3.4.8. Principal advisor to the SDO/DATT and Chief of Mission on the capabilities of the USAF.

3.3.4.9. Conducting C-12 flying operations according to Defense Intelligence Agency Instruction (DIAI) 3205.001 volume 3, *Defense Attaché Aircraft, Attaché and Security Cooperation Flight Operations: C-12 Flight Operations*.

3.3.4.10. Performing the security cooperation mission when designated by DoD and in accordance with DSCA Manual 5101.38-M, *Security Assistance Management Manual* (found at <http://www.samm.dsca.mil/listing/chapters>).

3.3.5. OPSCOs represent the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force to the host nation government officials. In this role, OPSCOs are charged with developing and maintaining cooperative relationships between the USAF and the host nation air force. Specific duties required of the OPSCO include:

3.3.5.1. Providing day-to-day office management of the Defense Attaché Office and other duties as assigned by the SDO/DATT.

3.3.5.2. Providing overall operational, financial, administrative, and logistical advice to the SDO/DATT, Service attachés, and Defense Attaché Office support staff.

3.3.5.3. Acting as the primary action officer to embassy and mission support offices.

3.3.5.4. Providing supervision of assigned military and civilian personnel as determined by supervisory chain.

3.3.5.5. Acting as the program manager for DIAs budget and the disbursement of funds within the Defense Attaché Office.

3.3.5.6. Providing oversight and management of DIAs reporting requirements.

3.3.5.7. Supporting information exchange and reporting programs.

3.3.6. OPSNCOs represent the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force to the host nation government officials. In this role, OPSNCOs are charged with developing and maintaining cooperative relationships between the USAF and the host nation air force. Specific duties required of the OPSNCO include:

3.3.6.1. Preparing office reports in accordance with DIA policy and regulations.

3.3.6.2. Coordinating clearances and providing support for transiting aircraft and aircrews and for U.S. Navy ship visits.

3.3.6.3. Coordinating personnel clearances for visiting DoD personnel.

3.3.6.4. Preparing office correspondence, personnel evaluations, and award recommendations.

3.3.6.5. Preparing travel vouchers, temporary lodging allowance claims, along with emergency and extraordinary expense authority vouchers and claims.

3.3.6.6. Supporting information exchange and reporting programs.



3.3.7. AMTs represent the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force to the host nation government officials. In this role, AMTs are charged with developing and maintaining cooperative relationships between the USAF and the host nation air force. Specific duties required of the AMT include:

- 3.3.7.1. Performing in-flight and safety scanning duties, basic maintenance, aircraft servicing, and engine and taxi operations to ensure a safe, operational and reliable mission aircraft.
- 3.3.7.2. Operating, maintaining, and securing all in-flight equipment.
- 3.3.7.3. Responsible for DIA mission reporting, maintenance reporting, diplomatic clearances, passenger safety briefing, aircraft records, payment documents, and cash payment requirements.
- 3.3.7.4. Maintaining current regulations, technical orders, and flight publications and ensure flight planning and weight balance software are current on the mission computer.
- 3.3.7.5. Serving as the designated On-Site Government Representative for the maintenance contract in accordance with DIA guidelines.
- 3.3.7.6. Flying on all operational missions as determined by the mission commander.
- 3.3.7.7. Serving as primary custodian responsible for all aircraft related Communications Security equipment.
- 3.3.7.8. Acting as the primary custodian for DoD Account Activity Code and Technical Order Distribution Office accounts.
- 3.3.7.9. Serving as the Safety NCO to help identify and mitigate hazards to safe operation of the C-12.
- 3.3.7.10. Performing OPSNCO duties when not accomplishing aircraft related duties.

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**Attachment 1****GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION*****References***

AFI 16-109, *International Affairs Specialist (IAS) Program*, 11 July 2017

AFI 40-701, *Medical Support to Family Member Relocation and Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)*, 19 November 2014

AFMAN 33-363, *Management of Records*, 1 March 2008

AFPD 16-1, *Security Cooperation*, 12 November 2015

DSCA Manual 5101.38-M, *Security Assistance Management Manual*, 30 April 2012

DIAI 3205.001 Volume 3, *Defense Attaché Aircraft, Attaché and Security Cooperation Flight Operations: C-12 Flight Operations*, 26 October 2015

DoD Directive 5205.75, *DoD Operations at U.S. Embassies*, 4 December 2013

DoD Instruction C-5105.81, *Implementing Instructions for DoD at U.S. Embassies*, 6 November 2008

DoD Instruction 5210.91, *Polygraph and Credibility Assessment (PCA) Procedures*, 12 August 2010

***Adopted Forms***

AF Form 673, *Air Force Publication/Form Action Request*

***Abbreviations and Acronyms***

**A/AIRA**—Assistant Air Attaché

**AFI**—Air Force Instruction

**AFSC**—Air Force Specialty Code

**AIRA**—Air Attaché

**AMT**—Airborne Mission Technician

**DAS**—Defense Attaché Service

**DEROS**—Date Eligible to Return from Overseas

**DIA**—Defense Intelligence Agency

**DOD**—Department of Defense

**DODD**—Department of Defense Directive

**DODI**—Department of Defense Instruction

**DSCA**—Defense Security Cooperation Agency

**EFMP**—Exceptional Family Member Program

**FAO**—Foreign Area Officer

**IAS**—International Affairs Specialist

**JMAS**—Joint Military Attaché School

**NCO**—Non-Commissioned Officer

**OPSCO**—Operations Coordinator

**OPSNCO**—Operations Noncommissioned Officer

**PCA**—Polygraph and Credibility Assessment

**SDO/DATT**—Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché

**VIP**—Very Important Person

### *Terms*

**Air Attaché (AIRA)**—The diplomatically-accredited USAF officer representing the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force to the Embassy Country Team and the host nation air force.

**Airborne Mission Technician (AMT)**—A crewmember who performs in-flight and safety scanning duties, basic maintenance, aircraft servicing, engine and taxi operations to ensure a safe, operational and reliable mission aircraft.

**Chief of Mission**—The principal officer (the ambassador) in charge of a diplomatic facility of the United States, including any individual assigned to be temporarily in charge of such a facility. The chief of mission is the personal representative of the President of the United States to the country of accreditation.

**Country Team**—The senior, in-country, United States coordinating and supervising body, headed by the chief of the diplomatic mission, usually an ambassador, and composed of the senior member of each represented United States department or agency, as desired by the chief of the United States diplomatic mission.

**Defense Attaché Office**—The DoD organization established as part of a United States diplomatic mission, through which the mission of the Defense Attaché Service, operated by the Defense Intelligence Agency, is accomplished. The Secretary of Defense may direct the assignment or attachment of other military detachments or elements to a Defense Attaché Office.

**Defense Attaché Service (DAS)**—An arm of the Defense Intelligence Agency tasked with representing the United States in defense and military related matters with foreign governments around the world.

**Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)**—A DoD-wide program that provides special assignment considerations for those military sponsors who have one or more family members with ongoing special medical or educational needs. In the Air Force, EFMP refers specifically to the assignment considerations provided by the Air Force Personnel Center. In other Services, the term EFMP is additionally used for specialized services delivered by the Military Treatment Facility or community service organizations to military families with special needs.

**Host Nation**—A nation which receives the forces and/or supplies of allied nations and/or NATO organizations to be located on, to operate in, or to transit through its territory.

**Joint Manpower Program**—The policy, processes, and systems used in determination and prioritization within and among joint Service manpower requirements.

**Operations Coordinator (OPSCO)**—An officer, warrant officer, senior non-commissioned officer, or Department of Defense civilian assigned to a foreign country as office manager of a Defense Attaché Office.

**Operations Non-Commissioned Officer (OPSNCO)**—A non-commissioned officer, or Department of Defense civilian assigned to a foreign country to administratively support a Defense Attaché Office.

**Polygraph and Credibility Assessment (PCA)**—The overarching term covering programs, research, training, and procedures that employ technologies to assess an individual's truthfulness with the aid of technical devices that measure physiological data or behavioral activity.

**Reserve Component**—The Armed Forces of the United States Reserve Component consists of the Army National Guard of the United States, the Army Reserve, the Navy Reserve, the Marine Corps Reserve, the Air National Guard of the United States, the Air Force Reserve, and the Coast Guard Reserve.

**Security Cooperation**—All Department of Defense interactions with foreign security establishments to build security relationships that promote specific United States security interests, develop allied and partner nation military and security capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations, and provide United States forces with peacetime and contingency access to allied and partner nations.

**Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché (SDO/DATT)**—The Principal DoD official in a United States embassy, as designated by the Secretary of Defense. The SDO/DATT is the Chief of Mission's principal military advisor on defense and national security issues, the senior diplomatically accredited DoD military officer assigned to a diplomatic mission, and the single point of contact for all DoD matters involving the embassy or DoD elements assigned to or working from the embassy.

**Note**—The purpose of this glossary is to help the reader understand terms used in this publication—It is not intended to be complete. Joint Publication 1—02, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, and Air Force Supplement to the Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, contain standardized terms and definitions for DoD and AF use, respectively.