



U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF): Background and Issues for Congress

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Summary

Special Operations Forces (SOF) play a significant role in U.S. military operations, and the Administration has given U.S. SOF greater responsibility for planning and conducting worldwide counterterrorism operations. U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) has about 63,000 active duty, National Guard, and reserve personnel from all four services and Department of Defense (DOD) civilians assigned to its headquarters, its four components, and one sub-unified command. The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) directs increases in SOF force structure, particularly in terms of increasing enabling units and rotary and fixed-wing SOF aviation assets and units.

USSOCOM's FY2013 Budget Request is \$10.409 billion, 0.6% lower (due to decreases in Operations & Maintenance, Research, Development, Test, & Evaluation, Procurement, and Military Construction funding) than the FY2012 Appropriation of \$10.477 billion. USSOCOM's FY2013 Budget Request also represents the first year some Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding will be migrated into USSOCOM's baseline budget request. As part of USSOCOM's FY2013 Budget Request, it plans to add an additional 3,355 service members and civilians, bringing it to a total of 66,594 personnel. During FY2013, USSOCOM plans to add its fifth and final 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR)-mandated Special Forces Battalion, as well as additional forces for the Ranger Regiment, Special Operations Aviation Regiment, and Civil Affairs and Military Information Support Operations units. In a similar manner, Air Force Special Operations plans to add additional personnel to a number of its units, and Naval Special Warfare, in addition to adding combat support and service support personnel, plans to add additional personnel to the Naval Special Warfare Center and School. The Marine Special Operations Command plans to add additional combat support and service support personnel in FY2013 as well.

The House and Senate Armed Services Committees have recommended full funding for USSOCOM's FY2013 Budget Request. Both House and Senate versions of the FY2013 National Defense Authorization contain a number of legislative provisions. These provisions, which will need to be reconciled in conference, include aviation foreign internal defense, undersea mobility capabilities, global rebalancing of U.S. SOF, use of existing authorities for deploying SOF, and limitations on NATO Special Operations Headquarters funding.

On January 5, 2012, the Administration unveiled its new strategic guidance refocusing U.S. strategic efforts to the Pacific and the Middle East and, at the same time, proposing significant cuts to ground forces. While there are presently few specifics known, this new strategic direction has the potential to significantly affect U.S. SOF. Of potential concern to Congress is with fewer general purpose forces, SOF operational tempo might increase. While DOD maintains it is willing to increase its investment in SOF, there are limitations on expansion because of stringent qualification and training standards. In addition, little is known about how SOF would be employed under this new strategy and if it even has the ability to take on new mission requirements. The further downsizing of ground forces (Army and Marines) also brings up concerns the services might be hard-pressed to establish and dedicate enabling units needed by USSOCOM while at the same time adequately supporting general purpose forces. An examination of proposed force structure in relation to anticipated requirements for enabling forces could prove useful to Congress.

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Background

Overview

Special Operations Forces (SOF) are elite military units with special training and equipment that can infiltrate into hostile territory through land, sea, or air to conduct a variety of operations, many of them classified. SOF personnel undergo rigorous selection and lengthy specialized training. The U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) oversees the training, doctrine, and equipping of all U.S. SOF units.

Command Structures and Components

In 1986 Congress, concerned about the status of SOF within overall U.S. defense planning, passed measures (P.L. 99-661) to strengthen special operations' position within the defense community. These actions included the establishment of USSOCOM as a new unified command. USSOCOM is headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, FL. The commander of USSOCOM is a four-star officer who may be from any military service. Navy Admiral William H. McRaven is the current commander of USSOCOM. The USSOCOM Commander reports directly to the Secretary of Defense, although an Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD/SOLIC) provides immediate civilian oversight over many USSOCOM activities.¹

USSOCOM has about 63,000 active duty, National Guard, and reserve personnel from all four services and Department of Defense (DOD) civilians assigned to its headquarters, its four components, and one sub-unified command.² USSOCOM's components are the U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC); the Naval Special Warfare Command (NAVSPECWARCOM); the Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC); and the Marine Corps Special Operations Command (MARSOC). The Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) is a USSOCOM sub-unified command. Additional command and control responsibilities are vested in Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs). TSOCs are theater-specific special operational headquarters elements designed to support a Geographical Combatant Commander's special operations logistics, planning, and operational control requirements, and are normally commanded by a general officer.³

¹ For a detailed description of ASD/SOLIC responsibilities, see <http://policy.defense.gov/solic/>.

² Information in this section is from "United States Special Operations Command Fact Book 2012," USSOCOM Public Affairs, January 2012. DOD defines a sub-unified command as a command established by commanders of unified commands, when so authorized through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to conduct operations on a continuing basis in accordance with the criteria set forth for unified commands. A subordinate unified command may be established on an area or functional basis. Commanders of subordinate unified commands have functions and responsibilities similar to those of the commanders of unified commands and exercise operational control of assigned commands and forces within the assigned joint operations area.

³ "United States Special Operations Command Fact Book 2012," USSOCOM Public Affairs, January 2012, p. 22.

Expanded USSOCOM Responsibilities

In addition to Title 10 authorities and responsibilities, USSOCOM has been given additional responsibilities. In the 2004 Unified Command Plan, USSOCOM was given the responsibility for synchronizing DOD plans against global terrorist networks and, as directed, conducting global operations against those networks.⁴ In this regard, USSOCOM “receives, reviews, coordinates and prioritizes all DOD plans that support the global campaign against terror, and then makes recommendations to the Joint Staff regarding force and resource allocations to meet global requirements.”⁵ In October 2008, USSOCOM was designated as the DOD proponent for Security Force Assistance (SFA).⁶ In this role, USSOCOM will perform a synchronizing function in global training and assistance planning similar to the previously described role of planning against terrorist networks. In addition, USSOCOM is now DOD’s lead for countering threat financing, working with the U.S. Treasury and Justice Departments on means to identify and disrupt terrorist financing efforts.

Army Special Operations Forces

U.S. Army SOF (ARSOF) includes approximately 28,500 soldiers from the Active Army, National Guard, and Army Reserve organized into Special Forces, Ranger, and special operations aviation units, along with civil affairs units, military information units, and special operations support units. ARSOF Headquarters and other resources, such as the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, are located at Fort Bragg, NC. Five active Special Forces (SF) Groups (Airborne),⁷ consisting of about 1,400 soldiers each, are stationed at Fort Bragg and at Fort Lewis, WA; Fort Campbell, KY; Fort Carson, CO; and Eglin Air Force Base, FL. Special Forces soldiers—also known as the Green Berets—are trained in various skills, including foreign languages, that allow teams to operate independently throughout the world. In December 2005, the 528th Sustainment Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) was activated at Ft. Bragg, NC, to provide combat service support and medical support to Army special operations forces.⁸

In FY2008, the U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) began to increase the total number of Army Special Forces battalions from 15 to 20, with one battalion being allocated to each active Special Forces Group. In August 2008, the Army stood up the first of these new battalions—the 4th Battalion, 5th Special Forces Groups (Airborne)—at Fort Campbell, KY.⁹ The Army expects that the last of these new Special Forces battalions will be operational by FY2013.¹⁰ Two Army National Guard Special Forces groups are headquartered in Utah and

⁴ “Fact Book: United States Special Operations Command,” USSOCOM Public Affairs, February 2011, p. 4.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Information in this section is from testimony given by Admiral Eric T. Olson, Commander, U.S. SOCOM, to the House Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee on the Fiscal Year 2010 National Defense Authorization Budget Request for the U.S. Special Operations Command, June 4, 2009. For a more in-depth treatment of Security Force Assistance, see CRS Report R41817, *Building the Capacity of Partner States Through Security Force Assistance*, by Thomas K. Livingston.

⁷ Airborne refers to “personnel, troops especially trained to effect, following transport by air, an assault debarkation, either by parachuting or touchdown.” Joint Publication 1-02, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, 12 April 2001, (As Amended Through 31 July 2010).

⁸ “United States Special Operations Command Fact Book 2012,” USSOCOM Public Affairs, January 2012, p. 14 .

⁹ Sean D. Naylor, “Special Forces Expands,” *Army Times*, August 11, 2008.

¹⁰ Association of the United States Army, “U.S. Army Special Operations Forces: Integral to the Army and the Joint (continued...)”

Alabama. An elite airborne light infantry unit specializing in direct action operations,¹¹ the 75th Ranger Regiment, is headquartered at Fort Benning, GA, and consists of three battalions and a regimental special troops battalion that provides support to the three Ranger Battalions. Army special operations aviation units, including the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne) (SOAR), headquartered at Fort Campbell, KY, feature pilots trained to fly the most sophisticated Army rotary-wing aircraft in the harshest environments, day or night, and in adverse weather.

Some of the most frequently deployed SOF assets are civil affairs (CA) units, which provide experts in every area of civil government to help administer civilian affairs in operational theaters. The 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Airborne) is the only active CA unit that exclusively support USSOCOM. In September 2011 the 85th Civil Affairs Brigade was activated to support U.S. Army General Purpose Forces (GPFs). All other CA units reside in the Reserves and are affiliated with Army GPF units. Military Information Support Operations (formerly known as psychological operations) units disseminate information to large foreign audiences through mass media. Two active duty Military Information Support Groups (MISG)—the 4th Military Information Support Group (MISG) (Airborne) and 8th Military Information Support Group (MISG) (Airborne)—are stationed at Fort Bragg, and their subordinate units are aligned with Geographic Combatant Commands.

U.S. Army Special Operations Aviation Command Established¹²

On March 25, 2011, the U.S. Army Special Operations Aviation Command (USASOAC) was activated at Ft. Bragg, NC. Commanded by a U.S. Army Aviation Brigadier General, USASOAC will command the 160th SOAR and other affiliated Army Special Operations Aviation organizations. USASOAC is intended to decrease the burden on the 160th SOAR commander (an Army colonel) so he can focus on warfighting functions as well as provide general officer representation at USASOC. In this role, the commander of USASOAC supposedly can better represent Army Special Operations aviation needs and requirements and have a greater influence on decisions affecting Army Special Operations Aviation.

Air Force Special Operations Forces¹³

The Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) is one of the Air Force's 10 major commands with over 12,000 active duty personnel and over 16,000 personnel when civilians, Guard, and Reserve personnel and units are included. While administrative control of AFSOC is

(...continued)

Force,” *Torchbearer National Security Report*, March 2010, p. 3.

¹¹ Direct action operations are short-duration strikes and other small-scale offensive actions conducted as a special operation in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive environments, as well as employing specialized military capabilities to seize, destroy, capture, exploit, recover, or damage designated targets. Direct action differs from conventional offensive actions in the level of physical and political risk, operational techniques, and the degree of discriminate and precise use of force to achieve specific objectives.

¹² Michael Hoffman, “Interview: Brig. Gen. Kevin Mangum,” *Defense News*, May 2, 2011, and U.S. Army Special Operations Command Fact Sheet, May 2011.

¹³ Information in this section is from Lt. Gen. Wurster's presentation to the Air Force Association, September 14 2010, http://www.afa.org/events/conference/2010/scripts/Wurster_9-14.pdf, and “United States Special Operations Command Fact Book 2012,” USSOCOM Public Affairs, January 2012, p. 18.

overseen by the Chief of Staff of the Air Force (CSAF), operational control is managed by the USSOCOM commander. AFSOC units operate out of four major continental United States (CONUS) locations and two overseas locations. The headquarters for AFSOC, the first Special Operations Wing (1st SOW), and the 720th Special Tactics Group are located at Hurlburt Field, FL. The 27th SOW is at Cannon AFB, NM. The 352nd and 353rd Special Operations Groups provide forward presence in Europe (RAF Mildenhall, England) and in the Pacific (Kadena Air Base, Japan) respectively. The Air National Guard's 193rd SOW at Harrisburg, PA, and the Air Force Reserve Command's 919th SOW at Duke Field, FL, complete AFSOC's major units. A training center, the U.S. Air Force Special Operations School and Training Center (AFSOTC), was recently established and is located at Hurlburt Field. AFSOC conducts the majority of its specialized flight training through an arrangement with Air Education and Training Command (AETC) via the 550th SOW at Kirtland AFB, NM. AFSOC's four active-duty flying units are composed of more than 100 fixed and rotary-wing aircraft.

In March 2009, Headquarters AFSOC declared initial operational capability (IOC)¹⁴ for the CV-22.¹⁵ USSOCOM plans for all 50 CV-22s to be delivered to AFSOC by 2015.¹⁶ Since 2009, AFSOC has completed three overseas deployments, to Central America, Africa, and Iraq, and continues to be engaged currently in overseas contingency operations. Despite critical reviews of the aircraft, AFSOC considers the CV-22 "central to our future."¹⁷ AFSOC operates a diverse fleet of modified aircraft. Of 12 major design series aircraft, 7 are variants of the C-130, the average age of some of which is over 40 years old, dating from the Vietnam era. Because of the age of the fleet, AFSOC considers recapitalization one of its top priorities.

AFSOC's Special Tactics experts include Combat Controllers, Pararescue Jumpers, Special Operations Weather Teams, and Tactical Air Control Party (TACPs). As a collective group, they are known as Special Tactics and have also been referred to as "Battlefield Airmen." Their basic role is to provide an interface between air and ground forces, and these airmen have highly developed skill sets. Usually embedded with Army, Navy, or Marine SOF units, they provide control of air fire support, medical and rescue expertise, or weather support, depending on the mission requirements.

As directed in the 2010 QDR, AFSOC plans to increase aviation advisory manpower and resources resident in the 6th Special Operations Squadron (SOS). The 6th SOS's mission is to assess, train, and advise partner nation aviation units with the intent to raise their capability and capacity to interdict threats to their nation. The 6th SOS provides aviation expertise to U.S. foreign internal defense (FID) missions.

¹⁴ According to DOD, IOC is attained when some units and/or organizations in the force structure scheduled to receive a system (1) have received it and (2) have the ability to employ and maintain it.

¹⁵ The CV-22 is the special operations version of the V-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft used by the Marine Corps.

¹⁶ USSOCOM Acquisitions and Logistics office, <http://www.socom.mil/soal/Pages/FixedWing.aspx>.

¹⁷ For further detailed reporting on the V-22 program, see CRS Report RL31384, *V-22 Osprey Tilt-Rotor Aircraft Program*, by Jeremiah Gertler.

Naval Special Operations Forces¹⁸

The Naval Special Warfare Command (NSWC) is composed of approximately 8,900 personnel, including more than 2,400 active-duty Special Warfare Operators, known as SEALs; 700 Special Warfare Boat Operators, known as Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen (SWCC); 700 reserve personnel; 4,100 support personnel; and more than 1,100 civilians. NSWC is organized around 10 SEAL Teams, 2 SEAL Delivery Vehicle (SDV) Teams, and 3 Special Boat Teams. SEAL Teams consist of six SEAL platoons each, consisting of two officers and 16 enlisted personnel. The major operational components of NSWC include Naval Special Warfare Groups One, Three, and Eleven, stationed in Coronado, CA, and Naval Special Warfare Groups Two, Four, and Ten and the Naval Special Warfare Development Group in Little Creek, VA. These components deploy SEAL Teams, SEAL Delivery Vehicle Teams, and Special Boat Teams worldwide to meet the training, exercise, contingency, and wartime requirements of theater commanders. Because SEALs are considered experts in special reconnaissance and direct action missions—primary counterterrorism skills—NSWC is viewed as well postured to fight a globally dispersed enemy ashore or afloat. NSWC forces can operate in small groups and have the ability to quickly deploy from Navy ships, submarines and aircraft, overseas bases, and forward-based units.

Marine Special Operations Command (MARSOC)¹⁹

On November 1, 2005, DOD announced the creation of the Marine Special Operations Command (MARSOC) as a component of USSOCOM. MARSOC consists of three subordinate units: the Marine Special Operations Regiment, which includes 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Marine Special Operations Battalions; the Marine Special Operations Support Group; the Marine Special Operations Intelligence Battalion; and the Marine Special Operations School. MARSOC Headquarters, the 2nd and 3rd Marine Special Operations Battalions, the Marine Special Operations School, and the Marine Special Operations Support Group and the Marine Special Operations Intelligence Battalion are stationed at Camp Lejeune, NC. The 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion is stationed at Camp Pendleton, CA. MARSOC forces have been deployed worldwide to conduct a full range of special operations activities. MARSOC missions include direct action, special reconnaissance, foreign internal defense, counterterrorism, information operations, and unconventional warfare. MARSOC currently has approximately 2,600 personnel assigned.

Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC)

According to DOD, JSOC “provides a joint headquarters to study special operations requirements, ensures interoperability and equipment standardization, develops joint special operations plans and tactics, and conducts joint special operations exercises and training.”²⁰ While not officially acknowledged by DOD or USSOCOM, JSOC, which is headquartered at Pope Air Force Base, NC, is widely believed to command and control what are described as the military’s

¹⁸ Information in this section is from Naval Special Warfare Command website, <http://www.public.navy.mil/nsw/pages/Mission.aspx>, accessed January 6, 2012, and “United States Special Operations Command Fact Book 2012,” USSOCOM Public Affairs, January 2012, pp. 16-17.

¹⁹ Information in this section is from “United States Special Operations Command Fact Book 2012,” USSOCOM Public Affairs, January 2012, pp. 20-21.

²⁰ “United States Special Operations Command Fact Book 2012,” USSOCOM Public Affairs, January 2012, p. 22.

special missions units—the Army’s Delta Force, the Navy’s SEAL Team Six, the 75th Ranger Regiment, the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, and the Air Force’s 24th Special Tactics Squadron.²¹ JSOC’s primary mission is believed to be identifying and destroying terrorists and terror cells worldwide.

A news release by the U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) News Service which named Vice Admiral William McRaven as Admiral Olson’s successor seemingly adds credibility to press reports about JSOC’s alleged counterterrorism mission. The USASOC press release notes, “McRaven, a former commander of SEAL Team 3 and Special Operations Command Europe, is the commander of the Joint Special Operations Command. As such, he has led the command as it ‘ruthlessly and effectively [took] the fight to America’s most dangerous and vicious enemies,’ Gates said.”²² Reports have also speculated about JSOC’s role in the mission to eliminate Osama bin Laden.²³

NATO Special Operations Headquarters²⁴

In May 2010, NATO established the NATO Special Operations Headquarters (NSHQ). The mission of NSHQ is to serve as the primary point of development, direction, and coordination of all NATO special operations-related activities in order to optimize employment of special operations forces, to include providing an operational command capability when directed by the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR). NSHQ is commanded by an American general officer. The NSHQ is located with the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons, Belgium, and will consist of 219 NATO personnel from 28 countries. Eighty nine U.S. service members will be assigned to NSHQ. In addition to traditional headquarters functions, NSHQ also runs the NATO Special Operations Forces School at Chievres Air Base in Belgium.

Organizational and Budgetary Issues

2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) Report SOF-Related Directives²⁵

The 2010 QDR contains a number of SOF-related directives pertaining to personnel, organizations, and equipment. These include the following:

- To increase key enabling assets²⁶ for special operations forces.

²¹ Jennifer D. Kibbe, “The Rise of the Shadow Warriors,” *Foreign Affairs*, Volume 83, Number 2, March/April 2004 and Sean D. Naylor, “JSOC to Become Three-Star Command,” *Army Times*, February 13, 2006.

²² U.S. Army Special Operations Command News Service, “Gates Nominates McRaven, Thurman for Senior Posts,” Release Number: 110303-02, March 3, 2011, <http://www.soc.mil/UNS/Releases/2011/March/110303-02.html>.

²³ Marc Ambinder, “The Secret Team That Killed Bin Laden,” *National Journal*, May 2, 2011 and David Ignatius, “How the U.S. Found and Finished Bin Laden,” *The Washington Post*, May 2, 2011.

²⁴ Information from this section is taken from a briefing provided to CRS by the NATO Special Operations Headquarters Liaison Officer on June 21, 2010.

²⁵ Information in this section is from Department of Defense, Quadrennial Defense Review Report, February 2010.

²⁶ Enabling assets are a variety of conventional military units that are assigned to support special operations forces.

- To maintain approximately 660 special operations teams;²⁷ 3 Ranger battalions; and 165 tilt-rotor/fixed-wing mobility and fire support primary mission aircraft.
- The Army and USSOCOM will add a company of upgraded cargo helicopters (MH-47G) to the Army’s 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment.
- The Navy will dedicate two helicopter squadrons for direct support to naval special warfare units.
- To increase civil affairs capacity organic to USSOCOM.
- Starting in FY2012, purchase light, fixed-wing aircraft to enable the Air Force’s 6th Special Operations squadron to engage partner nations for whose air forces such aircraft might be appropriate, as well as acquiring two non-U.S. helicopters to support these efforts.

The significance of these directives is that they serve as definitive goals for USSOCOM growth and systems acquisition as well as directing how the services will support USSOCOM.

FY2013 USSOCOM Budget Request²⁸

USSOCOM’s FY2013 Budget Request is \$10.409 billion, 0.6% lower (due to decreases in Operations & Maintenance, Research, Development, Test, & Evaluation, Procurement, and Military Construction funding) than the FY2012 Appropriation of \$10.477 billion. USSOCOM’s FY2013 Budget Request also represents the first year some Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding will be migrated into USSOCOM’s baseline budget request. USSOCOM notes that 80% of funding is apportioned to operational forces and their organic support units—often referred to as “tooth”—and the remaining 20% to the “tail”—other supporting units and functions.

FY2013 USSOCOM Budget Request Breakdown

Table I. FY2013 USSOCOM Budget Request, by Funding Category

Funding Category	Base Budget	OCO	Total
Operations & Maintenance (O&M)	\$5.091 billion	\$2.503 billion	\$7.594 billion
Procurement	\$1.782 billion	\$65 million	\$1.847 billion
Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation (RDT&E)	\$427 million	\$5 million	\$432 million
Military Construction (MILCON)	\$536 million	—	\$536 million
Totals	\$7.836 billion	\$2.573 billion	\$10.409 billion

²⁷ These teams include Army Special Forces Operational Detachment-Alpha (ODA) teams; Navy Sea, Air, and Land (SEAL) platoons; Marine special operations teams, Air Force special tactics teams; and operational aviation detachments.

²⁸ Information in this section is taken from U.S. Special Operations Command FY2013 Budget Highlights, February 2012, http://www.socom.mil/News/Documents/USSOCOM_FY_2013_Budget_Highlights.pdf.

Source: From U.S. Special Operations Command FY2013 Budget Highlights, February 2012, p. 9:
http://www.socom.mil/News/Documents/USSOCOM_FY_2013_Budget_Highlights.pdf.

FY2013 USSOCOM Force Structure Highlights²⁹

In FY2013 USSOCOM plans to grow the command as depicted in the following table. This force structure growth reflects provisions contained in the 2006 and 2010 QDRs.

Table 2. Planned USSOCOM Military and Civilian Growth in FY2013

	Military	Civilian	Total
Army FY2012	30,819	2,320	33,139
Army FY2013	32,420	2,479	34,899
Air Force FY2012	14,658	2,555	17,213
Air Force FY2013	15,287	2,524	17,811
Marine Corps FY2012	2,527	0	2,527
Marine Corps FY2013	2,984	138	3,122
Navy FY2012	9,049	1,311	10,360
Navy FY2013	9,524	1,238	10,762
USSOCOM FY2012	57,053	6,186	63,239
USSOCOM FY2013	60,215	6,379	66,594

Source: From U.S. Special Operations Command FY2013 Budget Highlights, February 2012, p. 10
http://www.socom.mil/News/Documents/USSOCOM_FY_2013_Budget_Highlights.pdf, p. 10.

FY2013 Planned Force Structure Additions³⁰

- **U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC):** Increases the authorization for one Special Forces Battalion (the fifth of the five mandated by the 2006 QDR); increases aircrews assigned to the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment; increases 75th Ranger Regiment personnel; increases military personnel for the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade and the 4th Military Information Support Operations (MISO) Group; and increases authorizations for military personnel providing combat support/service support to USASOC.
- **Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC):** Increases authorizations to provide support for the 1st Special Operations Group, 1st Special Operations Wing, 27th Special Operations Group, and 352nd Special Operations Group.
- **Naval Special Warfare Command (NSWC):** Increases authorizations for the Naval Special Warfare Center and School as well as providing increased combat support/service support to NSWC.

²⁹ Ibid., pp 10-11.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 11.

- **Marine Corps Special Operations Command (MARSOC):** Increases authorizations for combat support/combat service support.

FY2013 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 4310)³¹

The House Armed Services Committee recommended fully funding the Administration's FY2013 Budget Request for USSOCOM.

H.R. 122-479 to the FY2013 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 4310)³²

USSOCOM-specific provisions are highlighted in the following sections:

Aviation Foreign Internal Defense and Non-Standard Aviation Program (pp. 45-46)

The budget request contained \$97.7 million for the Non-Standard Aviation program, and also contained \$7.5 million for the U-28 program. The committee supports and approves of the recent changes to the U.S. Special Operations Command Aviation Foreign Internal Defense (AvFID) program as directed by reporting requirements in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (P.L. 112-81). The committee supports combining the Non-Standard Aviation (NSAv) light program with the AvFID program and the resultant efficiencies in training, maintaining, and supporting of forward deployed combined units. The committee believes that combining these two programs will reduce start-up costs, leverage logistical and operational experiences already gained in the Air Force Special Operations Active and Reserve Components, and field more rapidly a persistent and highly capable fixed-wing AvFID program. Further, the committee is pleased that the overall program realignment of assets will result in an estimated reduction of Contractor Logistics Support costs by approximately \$53.0 million between fiscal years 2013–17. The committee encourages the Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command and the Commander, Air Force Special Operations Command to continually and comprehensively validate geographic combatant commander requirements for AvFID and NSAv, and to prioritize them in a way that will ensure a globally persistent and effective presence that contributes comprehensively to security force assistance and national security objectives. The committee also encourages the Commander, Air Force Special Operations Command to: refine global site selection to optimize operational and logistical support; continue efforts to reduce Contracted Logistics Support across the Future Years Defense Program; and leverage U.S. Air Force Reserve assets to further reduce sustainment costs. To facilitate the implementation of the proposed changes to the AvFID and NSAv programs the committee supports the proposed modifications required to convert four Non-Standard Aviation (NSAv) light PC-12 aircraft into U-28 aircraft and adjusts authorized funding levels to permit these changes. The committee recommends \$34.9 million, a decrease of \$62.8million, for the AvFID program, and \$70.3 million, an increase of \$62.8 million, for the U-28 program.

³¹ Rules Committee Print 112-22 Text of H.R. 4310, The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013, May 10, 2012.

³² Report 112-479, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013, Report of the Committee of Armed Services, House of Representatives, May 11, 2012.

Combating Terrorism and Emergency Response Technology Innovation (p. 81)

The committee supports the research, development, testing, and evaluation (RDT&E) of certain technologies that combat terrorism, enhance emergency response capabilities, and enable U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF). This includes technologies that facilitate worldwide communications, improve situational awareness, and enable command and control. The committee also supports the development of certain technologies that would utilize mobile training content and distance learning capabilities to realize efficiencies and improve SOF and first responder proficiency in these critical areas. The committee therefore encourages the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict to continue RDT&E of certain technologies that support combating terrorism, emergency response, and U.S. SOF through offices and organizations such as the Combating Terrorism Technical Support Office and the Technical Support Working Group.

Counterterrorism and Irregular Warfare Capabilities (pp. 84-85)

The budget request contained \$77.1 million in PE 63122D for activities in the Combating Terrorism Technical Support Office (CTTSO). The budget request also contained \$26.3 million in PE 63121D for activities in Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict Advanced Development. Of the amount, \$7.5 million was requested for the Explosive Ordnance Disposal/Low-Intensity Conflict (EOD/ LIC) program, \$13.0 million was for the Irregular Warfare Support (IWS) program, and \$1.9 million was for Information Dissemination Concepts. The committee notes that according to the Department of Defense (DOD) new strategic guidance released in January 2012, “counter terrorism and irregular warfare” will remain primary DOD missions and, furthermore, that the Department “will continue to build and sustain tailored capabilities appropriate for counter terrorism and irregular warfare.” The committee believes that irregular warfare (IW) will be the likely form of warfare confronting the United States, and that developing and institutionalizing IW capability across the military services is critical to military success. The committee notes that CTTSO plays a unique role in frontend research, development, test, and evaluation (RDT&E) to help warfighters rapidly acquire “tailored capabilities” for counterterrorism and IW. Under the authority of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD SO/LIC), CTTSO works with interagency and international partners to identify combating terrorism capability requirements; select promising proposals for advanced technology development; and rapidly deliver capability to the warfighter through RDT&E support. The committee has consistently recognized the value CTTSO adds to rapid acquisition of IW capabilities through its business process for evaluating proposals; experience interacting with numerous interagency and international partners; and expertise in advanced development prototyping. Specifically, the committee report (H.Rept. 111-491) accompanying the National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2011, praised the Irregular Warfare Support (IWS) Legacy program for being “immediately effective in disrupting terrorist network activities, saving lives, and building a leave-behind indigenous capability.” The committee noted that the Legacy program is one of many CTTSO programs that develop innovative, non-materiel, and multi-disciplinary methodologies and strategies for disrupting irregular and asymmetric threats and also directed the Secretary of Defense to assess the program’s applicability against other network-based threats. The committee has expressed concerns regarding CTTSO’s location under ASD SO/LIC and the limited funding it receives compared to the emphasis on IW within DOD strategies. In the conference report (H.Rept. 111-

288) accompanying the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010, the conferees expressed concern that, “(1) this small program office in the Office of the Secretary of Defense appears to be the only entity in the Department, and perhaps in the executive branch, engaged in these types of activities; and (2) that so little funding is requested each year to sustain such activities and to scale up those that prove to be successful.” The committee notes that CTTSO has program management authority for three sub-organizations: the Technical Support Working Group (TSWG), the EOD/LIC program, and the IWS program. The committee is concerned that projected funding for IWS, EOD/LIC, and Information Dissemination Concepts (IDC) are reduced across the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP) before being eliminated in fiscal year 2016. Given the Department’s guidance to “build and sustain tailored capabilities” for IW missions, the likelihood that future challenges will be irregular in nature, and the enduring need to maintain a robust RDT&E and flexible procurement and acquisition capabilities to support IW requirements, the committee urges the Secretary of Defense to reexamine the funding reductions to IWS, EOD/LIC, and IDC through fiscal year 2016. The committee directs the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, the Director of the Office of Secretary of Defense for Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation and other relevant offices, to include those within the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, to brief the congressional defense committees within 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act on CTTSO funding changes over the FYDP and present options for fulfilling IW rapid capability development gaps if funding is eliminated for the IWS program, EOD/LIC, and IDC. The committee recommends \$102.1 million, an increase of \$25.0 million, in PE 63122D for activities in the Combating Terrorism Technical Support Office (CTTSO).

Critical Gaps in Undersea Mobility Capabilities (pp. 85-86)

The budget request contained \$26.4 million in Program Element (PE)1160483BB for Special Operations Forces Underwater Systems. The committee is aware that U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) has realigned the Undersea Mobility Program to comply with the additional oversight requirements pursuant to Section 144 of the National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2012 (P.L. 112-81). The committee is also aware that the proposed program structure for fiscal year 2013 includes scaled-down requirements for dry combat submersibles to operate via host surface ship only with moderate capacity and varying endurance. The committee is concerned that frequent program and strategy changes to the Undersea Mobility Program and a lack of funding priority in critical research, development, testing and evaluation, have delayed the introduction of advanced capabilities for both wet combat submersible replacement and dry combat submersible development. The committee is concerned that the current program schedule for dry combat submersibles, in particular, will not field an operational evaluation platform until early 2015 with extended integrated testing not taking place until 2016. Given current dry combat submersible capability gaps and a potential shift in strategic emphasis to the Asia-Pacific and other regions that present anti-access and area-denial challenges, the committee is concerned that USSOCOM’s Undersea Mobility Program will be unable to meet potential geographic combatant command requirements to operate in denied maritime areas from strategic distances. Additionally, the committee is concerned that the highly perishable and technical skill sets required to operate wet and dry combat submersibles resident within the Naval Special Warfare community have not been fully exercised and utilized in recent years, thereby increasing capability gaps and risks to the overall program. The committee has previously expressed concern with these current capability gaps and recognized the operational importance of the Undersea Mobility Program to provide technologically-advanced undersea mobility platforms for U.S. Naval Special Warfare Command and USSOCOM. The committee therefore encourages the Commander of U.S. Special Operations Command to review the current Undersea Mobility Program to mitigate risk,

potentially accelerate the fielding of safe, efficient, and financially sound operational wet and dry systems, and to continually communicate with the congressional defense committees to ensure programmatic success and prevent previous program shortfalls. The committee recommends \$61.4 million, an increase of \$35 million, Special Operations Forces Underwater Systems.

Global Rebalancing of U.S. Special Operations Forces (pp. 217-218)

The committee is aware of an ongoing effort within U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) to comprehensively review its present force structure to facilitate the accomplishment of special operations activities as defined in section 167 of title 10, United States Code. The committee understands that USSOCOM is coordinating the review with the respective staffs of the geographic combatant commands, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense. The committee further understands that these initiatives are focused in several areas, including enabling and resourcing of the Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs), the development of a USSOCOM force management directorate, the improvement of USSOCOM's interagency coordination and presence, and the strengthening of global special operations forces (SOF) relationships through the establishment of regional SOF coordination centers. The committee understands that the proposed changes in USSOCOM authorities pertain to command authorities primarily identified within the Unified Command Plan and that the changes being considered would reflect USSOCOM's global area of operations and emphasize trans-regional roles and responsibilities. On balance, the committee supports this ongoing review of U.S. Special Operations Forces and USSOCOM's coordination within the Department of Defense. In particular, the committee is encouraged by the potential establishment of a force development directorate within USSOCOM that would consolidate force development and management functions and ensure a unified approach to training, education, and management of the force. The committee expects such an initiative to greatly improve deployment predictability and ultimately enhance operational flexibility of the force. The committee encourages USSOCOM to consider incorporating more formalized degree and non-degree educational programs for officer and enlisted personnel and to leverage existing programs and resources such as those within the National Defense University's College of International Security Affairs, Naval Postgraduate School, and the Joint Special Operations University. While the committee supports efforts to establish additional regional coordination centers similar to North Atlantic Treaty Organization Special Operations Headquarters, the committee encourages USSOCOM to conduct a comprehensive review of requirements in this area to include geographic prioritization and resourcing and also additive funds through Major Force Programs 2, 10, and 11. Additionally, the committee encourages a concomitant review of existing statutory authorities to support SOF security force assistance, training, and advising to improve regional security and support geographic combatant commander requirements. Such a review should include potential modifications to current statutory authorities presently being utilized with the goal of making these existing authorities flexible enough to support SOF activities. While the committee is supportive of additional interagency coordination efforts, the committee expresses concern at the potential redundant costs associated with the establishment of interagency coordination centers within the National Capitol Region, associated infrastructure costs, information technology, and how these potentially duplicative centers may be rendering previous multi-million dollar investments such as USSOCOM's Interagency Task Force redundant or obsolete. The committee expects these interagency initiatives to be resource-neutral. The committee further expects to be kept fully and currently informed of these interagency initiatives. Therefore, the committee directs the Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, to brief the congressional defense committees within 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act

providing an update on these initiatives and all efforts to globally rebalance U.S. Special Operations Forces.

Use of Existing Authorities for U.S. Special Operations Forces (pp. 228-229)

The committee commends the efforts by the Commander, United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), to rebalance our Special Operations Forces (SOF) in terms of geographic focus and a return to traditional SOF activities beyond the counter-terrorism focus of recent years. The committee understands that the Commander, USSOCOM may require broader authorities, both command and statutory, to accomplish some of the command's stated goals. The committee is aware of a legislative proposal initiative by USSOCOM that may consider such broader authorities. However, elsewhere in this report, the committee has expressed concern that some existing authorities are not exercised to their full potential due to self-imposed bureaucratic constraints. In that context, the committee would like to highlight two existing authorities which it believes are well-suited for the Commander, USSOCOM's rebalancing effort.

First, the committee believes that the Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) authority (10 U.S.C. 2011) is a valuable tool for the training of United States Special Operations Forces (SOF). JCET events and activities with host nation military forces improve joint and allied readiness and interoperability, facilitate the exchange of techniques, and mutually enhance military professionalism. The activities often enhance U.S. influence in the host countries, providing an invaluable means of establishing critical military-to-military relationships. JCETs are also an important part of a Geographic Combatant Commander's theater engagement plan. However, the committee believes that, while JCET engagements have most recently taken place in 50 countries per year, these engagements have not fully realized their potential due to insufficient resourcing and an inability to persistently engage on a recurring basis in key regions and countries. The committee also notes that section 2011 title 10, United States Code, authorizes the training of a friendly foreign country's "armed forces and other security forces" and that this training is therefore not limited to the foreign country's Special Operations Forces. Further, the committee notes that while the purpose of the authority is to "train the Special Operations Forces of a [United States] combatant command," that this training is not limited to only counter-terrorism related training. Therefore, as the Geographic Combatant Commands develop JCET engagements, the committee encourages them to consider JCETs that address the broader requirements of a friendly foreign country's armed forces and other security forces, and also the full range of Special Operations Activities as described by section 167 title 10, United States Code, as appropriate. Second, the committee understands that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) routinely provides funding to the commanders of the geographic combatant commanders to conduct activities authorized by the Combatant Commander Initiative Fund (CCIF) (section 166a of title 10, United States Code). The committee believes that the Commander of USSOCOM, by virtue of commanding a global and unified combatant command, is fully eligible for participation in the CCIF process. Moreover, USSOCOM's mission areas, as set forth in section 167 of title 10, United States Code, make it particularly suited to accomplish certain CCIF-related activities. Therefore, the committee recommends that the CJCS provide guidance on how USSOCOM might directly participate in the CCIF, including how to coordinate with any relevant geographic combatant commanders as required, or how changes to the Unified Command Plan may provide USSOCOM with more autonomy to execute CCIF activities. The committee also encourages the Commander, USSOCOM to be proactive in developing CCIF activity proposals for the consideration of the CJCS.

Section 1068—Report on Counterproliferation Capabilities and Limitations (p. 240)

This section would require the Secretary of Defense to provide a report to the congressional defense committees by March 1, 2013, outlining operational capabilities, limitations, and shortfalls within the Department of Defense with respect to counterproliferation and combating weapons of mass destruction involving special operations forces and key enabling forces.

Comptroller General Review of Use of General Purpose Forces and Special Operations Forces for Security Force Assistance (pp. 252-253)

The committee understands that, in the past few years, the Department of Defense has emphasized security force assistance which encompasses efforts to build the capacity and capability of partner nation security forces. Historically, special operations forces have conducted the majority of the Department's activities to train, advise, and assist partner nation security forces. However, in anticipation of its growing importance, the Department has identified the need to strengthen the capabilities of its general purpose forces to conduct security force assistance. In the budget request for fiscal year 2013, the Department noted that with the drawdown of forces in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, more opportunities will be available for special operations forces to conduct advising and training of partner nation security forces, and requested additional resources for U.S. Special Operations Forces. At the same time, the Department has taken steps to identify capability requirements, implement new approaches to organizing units, and adjust training to enhance the ability of general purpose forces to conduct security force assistance. The committee is aware of the Government Accountability Office's previous work on challenges the Department faces in defining its concept for security force assistance and guiding combatant command and military service efforts to plan for, prepare and conduct related activities, as well as its work on challenges U.S. Special Operations Command has faced in providing sufficient numbers of trained personnel to meet the demand for increased deployments. Given the Department's plans to continue to rely on special operations forces, as well as its efforts to expand the capabilities of the general purpose forces to perform security force assistance at a time when the overall size of the force is constrained, the committee believes that the roles and responsibilities of both of these forces, with regard to security force assistance, needs to be clearly drawn and understood to avoid confusion and duplication. In order this Act that evaluates the Department of Defense's efforts in this area, including: the extent to which the Department has delineated the roles and responsibilities of general purpose and special operations forces; distinguished between the types of situations or environments where the respective types of forces would be used to conduct security force assistance activities; and whether the Department has identified, synchronized, and prioritized the respective requirements and resource needs for building the capabilities of both types of forces.

Counter Lord's Resistance Army and Related Operations (p. 254)

The committee notes the efforts of the Department of Defense and U.S. Africa Command, consistent with the Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-172), to assist the Ugandan People's Defense Force as they combat the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and attempt to bring Joseph Kony to justice. The deployment of approximately 100 United States special operations forces in support of this mission is a step in addressing a two decade reign of terror that has killed and brutalized thousands while destabilizing the region. The committee notes that Congress has provided the authority in section

1206 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (P.L. 112-81) to support this effort and commends it to the attention of the Secretary of Defense. However, the committee also cautions that special operations forces should be employed judiciously and within circumstances that fully leverage the unique skill sets that these highly trained units possess, in keeping with important U.S. national security interests. The committee believes that stability in Africa is in the United States' national interest. Supporting justice, human rights, and poverty reduction, as well as facilitating access of African goods and services to world markets, brings a stability that stretches beyond just the local region and has a positive impact upon the United States and our global partners. Therefore, the committee encourages the Administration to continue its interagency approach to stabilization efforts and security sector reform programs across the region, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, and South Sudan, among others. In so doing, the Administration should consider using the authorities granted by the Global Security Contingency Fund, which was crafted for this sort of multi-faceted security challenge. The committee notes that the Administration has used the Global Train and Equip authority (i.e. "1206") for this purpose but cautions that this was a special case use of that authority. Generally, the intent of "1206" in the counter-terrorism role is to combat terrorist organizations with a global reach and an agenda that is directly hostile to the United States and our partners. The LRA, while a heinous entity, does not necessarily rise to that standard on its own.

Funding Source for the Authority for Support of Special Operations to Combat Terrorism (pp. 255-256)

The committee has supported the judicial and prudent use of the Authority for Support of Special Operations to Combat Terrorism, known as "1208" authority, from section 1208 of the Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005 (P.L. 108-375). The committee is aware that this authority has been critical in providing support to foreign forces, irregular forces, groups, or individuals engaged in supporting or facilitating ongoing military operations by U.S. Special Operations Forces to combat terrorism. The committee notes that since its inception, funding for this authority has been taken from base budget funds for operation and maintenance rather than from a distinct funding line within Major Force Program 11 (MFP-11) up to the present authorized level of \$50.0 million per year. Considering the future of the authority and the need to provide program consistency and agility, the committee directs the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, in coordination with the Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, to provide a report to the House Committee on Armed Services within 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, that analyzes the feasibility of creating a distinct MFP-11 funding line in the budget to support "1208" activities rather than using base budget funds made available for operations and maintenance. The report may be submitted in classified or unclassified formats, as required.

Village Stability Operations and Afghan Local Police (pp. 264-265)

The committee is aware of continued expansion of local security initiatives such as Village Stability Operations (VSO) and the Afghan Local Police (ALP) program, designed to empower local elders and marginalize the influence of the criminal and extremist insurgency. The committee is aware that these activities have grown in scope and scale, and are effectively empowering Afghans to enable security and stability at the local level with support from, and in coordination with, district, provincial, and national level authorities from the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) and coalition forces. To support VSO and ALP

expansion, the committee is also aware that conventional U.S. infantry battalions have been assigned under the operational control of Combined Forces Special Operations Component Command-Afghanistan (CFSOCC–A), which had heretofore been manned almost exclusively by Special Operations Forces. The committee understands that program goals include an expansion to approximately 30,000 Afghan Local Police within nearly 100 districts. The committee understands that as ALP sites mature, the need for daily U.S. Special Operations Forces presence decreases, and that certain mature sites are being monitored and maintained by U.S. general purpose forces. While the committee understands that these mature sites require limited over-watch by U.S. and coalition forces, the committee remains concerned that improper and inconsistent expansion of VSO/ALP efforts are jeopardizing realized gains, encouraging splinter and outlier activities not coordinated within the overall strategy, and potentially damaging credibility of coalition forces and GIRoA when unable to deliver security, development, and governance as promised or envisioned at the local, district, provincial and national levels. These concerns may be manifesting in recent incidents of violence involving ALP suggesting at best, potential problems in vetting and recruiting, or at worst, Taliban and insurgent infiltration of ALP. The committee therefore encourages the Commander, International Security Forces in Afghanistan to ensure consistent program expansion, to ensure vetting and recruiting standards are not lowered, and to incorporate or disband where appropriate non- GIRoA approved similar or outlier programs not coordinated within the overall strategy such as Critical Infrastructure Protection, Community-Based Security Solutions, and the Interim Security for Critical Infrastructure.

Section 1234—NATO Special Operations Headquarters (pp. 270-271)

This section would authorize appropriations for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Special Operations Headquarters (NSHQ) through fiscal year 2013. This section would also limit the obligation or expenditure of funds for fiscal year 2013 to not more than 50 percent until the Secretary of Defense finalizes and formalizes the establishment of an executive agent and lead component for NSHQ.

FY2013 National Defense Authorization Act (S. 3254)³³

The Senate Armed Services Committee recommended fully funding the Administration’s FY2013 Budget Request for USSOCOM.

H.Rept. 112-173, FY2013 National Defense Authorization Act (S. 3254)³⁴

USSOCOM-specific provisions are highlighted in the following sections:

³³ S. 3254, The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013, June 4, 2012.

³⁴ S. 3254, Report 112-173, June 4, 2012.

Sec. 153. Shallow Water Combat Submersible Program (pp. 48-49)

(a) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commander of the United States Special Operations Command shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report setting forth the following:

(1) A description of the efforts of the contractor under the Shallow Water Combat Submersible (SWCS) program and the United States Special Operations Command to improve the accuracy of the tracking of the schedule and costs of the program.

(2) The revised timeline for the initial and full operational capability of the Shallow Water Combat Submersible.

(3) A current estimate of the cost to meet the basis of issue requirement under the program.

(b) SUBSEQUENT REPORTS.—

(1) QUARTERLY REPORTS REQUIRED.—The Commander of the United States Special Operations Command shall submit to the congressional defense committees on a quarterly basis updates on the metrics from the earned value management system with which the Command is tracking the schedule and cost performance of the contractor of the Shallow Water Combat Submersible program.

(2) SUNSET.—The requirement in paragraph (1) shall cease on the date the Shallow Water Combat Submersible has completed operational testing and has been found to be operationally effective and operationally suitable.

SEC. 342. NATO Special Operations Headquarters (pp. 108-110)

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 138 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 2350n. NATO Special Operations Headquarters

“(a) AUTHORIZATION.—Of the amounts authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2013 and for subsequent fiscal years for the Department of Defense for operation and maintenance, up to \$50,000,000 may be used for a fiscal year for the purposes set forth in subsection (b) for support of operations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Special Operations Headquarters.

“(b) PURPOSES.—The Secretary of Defense may provide funds for the NATO Special Operations Headquarters—“(1) to improve coordination and cooperation between the special operations forces of NATO member countries;

“(2) to facilitate joint operations by special operations forces of NATO member countries;

“(3) to support command, control, and communications capabilities peculiar to special operations forces of NATO member countries;

“(4) to promote special operations forces intelligence and informational requirements within the NATO structure; and

“(5) to promote interoperability through the development of common equipment standards, tactics, techniques, and procedures, and through execution of multinational education and training programs.

“(c) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than April 1 of each year, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report regarding Department of Defense support for the NATO Special Operations Headquarters. Each report shall include the following:

“(1) The total amount of funding provided to the NATO Special Operations Headquarters.

“(2) A summary of the activities funded with such support.

“(3) Other contributions, financial or in kind, provided in support of the NATO Special Operations Headquarters by other NATO member countries.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 2350m the following new item: “2350n. NATO Special Operations Headquarters.”

Sec. 1042. Modification of Authority on Training of Special Operations Forces With Friendly Foreign Forces (pp. 370-373)

(a) AUTHORITY TO PAY FOR MINOR MILITARY CONSTRUCTION IN CONNECTION WITH TRAINING.—Subsection (a) of section 2011 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) Expenses of minor military construction directly related to that training with such expenses payable from amounts available to the commander for unspecified minor military construction, except that—

“(A) the amount of any project for which such expenses are so payable may not exceed \$250,000; and

“(B) the total amount of such expenses so paid in any fiscal year may not exceed \$2,000,000.”

(b) PURPOSES OF TRAINING.—Subsection (b) of such section is amended to read as follows:

“(b) PURPOSES OF TRAINING.—The purposes of the training for which payment may be made under subsection (a) shall be as follows:

“(1) To train the special operations forces of the combatant command.

“(2) In the case of a commander of a combatant command having a geographic area of responsibility, to train the military forces and other security forces of a friendly foreign country in a manner consistent with the Theater Campaign Plan of the commander for that geographic area.”

(c) PRIOR APPROVAL.—Subsection (c) of such section is amended by inserting before the period at the end of the second sentence the following: “, or, in the case of training activities carried out after the date of the enactment of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013, the approval of the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of State”.

(d) REPORTS.—Subsection (e) of such section is amended—(1) in paragraph (3)—

(A) by inserting “or other security” after “foreign” the first place it appears; and

(B) by striking “foreign military personnel” and inserting “such foreign personnel”; (2) in paragraph (4)—(A) by striking “and military training activities” and inserting “military training activities”; and (B) by inserting before the period at the end the following: “, and training programs sponsored by the Department of State”; (3) by re designating paragraph (6) as paragraph (7); and (4) by inserting after paragraph (5) the following new paragraph (6): “(6) A description of any minor military construction projects for which expenses were paid, including a justification of the benefits of each such project to training under this section.”

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the of the enactment of this Act. The amendments made by subsection (d) shall apply with respect to any reports submitted under subsection (e) of section 2011 of title 10, United States Code 10 (as so amended), after that date.

Sec. 1533. Plan for Transition in Funding of United States Special Operations Command from Supplemental Funding for Overseas Contingency Operations to Recurring Funding Under the Future-Years Defense Program (p. 466)

The Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees, at the same time as the budget of the President for fiscal year 2014 is submitted to Congress pursuant to section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, a plan for the transition of funding of the United States Special Operations Command from funds authorized to be appropriated for overseas contingency operations (commonly referred to as the “overseas contingency operations budget”) to funds authorized to be appropriated for recurring operations of the Department of Defense in accordance with applicable future-years defense programs under section 221 of title 10, United States Code (commonly referred to as the “base budget”).

Potential Issues for Congress

New Strategic Guidance and SOF

On January 5, 2012, President Obama, Secretary of Defense Panetta, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Dempsey publically unveiled new strategic guidance that not only rebalances U.S. strategic posture toward Asia and the Middle East but also will result in a “smaller and leaner” U.S. military.³⁵ During this unveiling, Secretary Panetta noted the following:

³⁵ DOD News Release, “Statement as Prepared by Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta on the Defense Strategic Guidance,” No. 009-12, January 5, 2012.

As we reduce the overall defense budget, we will protect, and in some cases increase, our investments in special operations forces, in new technologies like (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance), and unmanned systems, in space—and, in particular, in cyberspace—capabilities, and also our capacity to quickly mobilize if necessary.³⁶

While specific details on force structure cuts have not yet been made public, there has been a great deal of speculation that the Army and Marines will undergo significant downsizing over the next decade. With fewer general purpose forces available and USSOCOM's self-imposed growth limitations to preserve the quality of the force, U.S. SOF might find its operational tempo increased. There are also aspects of this new strategic guidance that require further explanation. For example, defense officials offer that a reliance on smaller teams operating in innovative ways will be a central tenet of this new strategy.³⁷ This seemingly suggests an expanded role for U.S. SOF although few details have been made available. While DOD has indicated a willingness to increase its investment in SOF, there are limitations on how much SOF can expand due to the stringent standards—particularly for operators—and long training lead times required for most special operations specialties. As part of continued debate on the new strategic guidance, it might prove useful to examine the question of how DOD envisions employing SOF under this new strategy, SOF's capacity for expansion, and SOF's ability to take on new mission requirements as general purpose forces are drawn down.

Impact of Army and Marine Corps Downsizing on USSOCOM Units³⁸

On January 6, 2011, then Secretary of Defense Gates and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen announced that starting in FY2015, the Army would decrease its permanently authorized endstrength by 27,000 soldiers and the Marines would lose anywhere between 15,000 to 20,000 Marines. The Administration's January 5, 2012, issuance of new strategic guidance suggests additional downsizing for ground forces over and above those directed in 2011 by Secretary Gates. While Congress has directed USSOCOM and the services agree on an annual basis on how enabling forces will be dedicated to USSOCOM, there are factors which might adversely affect the provision of enabling forces. Because USSOCOM draws its operators and support troops from the services (primarily from the non-commissioned officer [NCO] and junior officer ranks), USSOCOM will have a smaller force pool from which to draw its members, including some members that would be assigned to organic USSOCOM enabling units. Also, in light of anticipated ground force cuts, the services might be hard-pressed to establish and dedicate enabling units to support USSOCOM while at the same time providing support in kind to general purpose forces. As part of ground force reductions and the likely expansion of SOF missions and responsibilities, an examination of anticipated USSOCOM enabling force requirements in relation to proposed force structure could prove beneficial not only for mission planning purposes but also in terms of future resource investments.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ U.S. Department of Defense News Transcript, "DOD News Briefing with Secretary Gates and Adm. Mike Mullen from the Pentagon" January 6, 2011, <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4747>, and DOD News Release, "Statement as Prepared by Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta on the Defense Strategic Guidance," No. 009-12, January 5, 2012.

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