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MILITARY INFORMATION SUPPORT OPERATIONS

Improved Coordination, Evaluations, and Training and Equipping Are Needed

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# GAO Accountability \* Integrity \* Reliability Highlights

Highlights of GAO-13-426SU, a report to the Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Senate

#### Why GAO Did This Study

To combat violent extremist messages. DOD conducts MISO activities to influence the attitudes and behavior of foreign audiences. MISO are led by approximately 7,000 Army soldiers. In 2006, an organizational restructuring moved control of about two-thirds of Army MISO forces from the Army's Special Operations Command to its Reserve Command. MISO special operations forces support combatant commanders and U.S. embassies by conducting subject matter expert exchanges and other activities, such as creating news websites for foreign audiences. During contingencies, reserve forces are mobilized and support combatant commanders through activities such as leaflet dissemination and radio broadcasts.

GAO was asked to review MISO activities and organization. This report addresses the extent to which DOD (1) coordinates its MISO with other U.S. government efforts in individual countries and in regions around the world, (2) tracks information on and evaluates effectiveness of MISO, and (3) is organized to train and equip its MISO forces to effectively support combatant commanders. GAO analyzed various DOD MISO documents and guidance, and interviewed DOD and interagency officials about MISO activities.

#### What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that DOD improve coordination of its regional websites, track and assess all MISO activities, and improve training and equipping for the MISO reserves. DOD partially agreed. GAO continues to believe these recommendations are valid as discussed in this report.

View GAO-13-426SU. For more information, contact John Pendleton at (202) 512-3489 or pendletonj@gao.gov.

## MILITARY INFORMATION SUPPORT OPERATIONS

Improved Coordination, Evaluations, and Training and Equipping Are Needed

#### What GAO Found

Military Information Support Operations (MISO) programs are generally well coordinated with other U.S. government efforts ongoing in individual countries, but the Department of Defense (DOD) is missing opportunities to coordinate on some activities focused in regions around the world. State Department officials from various regional bureaus have indicated that coordination generally works well at U.S. embassies. For example, in one Asian Pacific country, the MISO team joined with other U.S. government elements to incorporate counterradicalization messages into disaster response activities. However, Special Operations Command's regionally-focused MISO websites—which include articles that highlight positive aspects of counterterrorism efforts and negative effects of adversaries' actions—are not well coordinated with other MISO or other interagency efforts operating in the countries the websites cover. DOD's policy stresses the importance of synchronizing MISO efforts, but until DOD improves coordination of its websites it risks expending MISO resources in ways that are not complementary to other agencies' programs.

(FOUO) DOD tracks and evaluates most individual MISO activities; however, some activities are excluded from tracking, and the evaluation results are not compiled to assess progress made against strategic goals. Specifically, information on some MISO activities funded by interagency or host nation partners is not captured. In one country, for example, subject matter expert exchanges funded by the host nation are not being tracked. Further, the results of individual evaluations are not being used to measure progress made toward achieving geographic combatant commanders' theater objectives or Special Operations Command's strategic goals. Moreover, GAO found that the MISO community lacks benchmarks, milestones, and end goals to determine when a deployed MISO team has accomplished its mission so that resources may be shifted as appropriate. Without tracking all MISO activities and measuring their impact on strategic goals, it will be difficult for DOD to provide Congress complete information and know if MISO is affecting theater objectives or if changes are needed to improve global MISO efforts.

(FOUO) Reserve MISO forces may not be adequately trained or equipped for contingencies as a result of the 2006 Secretary of Defense decision to divide the MISO organizational structure. Specifically, DOD continued to provide funding and personnel support to train and equip the 2,800 active duty special operations forces but did not continue to do so for the 4,200 reserve forces. For example, while DOD states that the reserves must have cultural understanding and language skills to conduct MISO, U.S. Army Reserve Command currently is not required by Army regulation to fund such training opportunities for the reserves and therefore is not providing sufficient funding for such training. Additionally, DOD has not determined who pays for sustainment and maintenance of MISO equipment used by reserves. Without addressing training and equipment issues that resulted from the MISO's divided organizational structure, there is an increased risk that the MISO reserve forces may not have as strong of a cultural and language understanding compared to special operations forces and may not be as appropriately equipped to function in the countries in which they may operate.

United States Government Accountability Office

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#### **Abbreviations**

DOD	Department of Defense
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia
MISO	Military Information Support Operations
MIST	Military Information Support Team
SOCOM	Special Operations Command
State	Department of State

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April 24, 2013

The Honorable Carl Levin Chairman Committee on Armed Services United States Senate

The Honorable John McCain United States Senate

(FOUO) The growth of global communications allows violent extremists to quickly transmit messages around the world, which can affect both U.S. military operations and foreign audience perceptions of the United States. To better support U.S. government and Department of Defense (DOD) activities and policies, DOD is conducting Military Information Support Operations (MISO) to influence foreign audiences to change their attitudes and behaviors in support of U.S. government and DOD objectives. With a fiscal year 2012 budget of approximately \$54 million,1 MISO efforts during peacetime operations include supporting combatant commanders by building host nation military capacity through subject matter expert exchanges and creating websites and magazines. Additionally, MISO units consisting of active duty special operations forces, known as Military Information Support Teams (MISTs), support DOD and other U.S. government efforts in select U.S. embassies around the world to deter support for violent extremist organizations. During larger operations, reserve component MISO forces may be mobilized and support combatant commanders through activities such as leaflet dissemination and radio broadcasts.<sup>2</sup> When used effectively, MISO may help combat violent extremism and maximize the local populace's support for DOD operations; if used ineffectively, MISO activities have the potential to undermine the credibility of the United States and threaten DOD's and other agencies' efforts to accomplish key foreign policy goals.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>This amount contains only special operations forces MISO funding. The reserves are attached to supported units during operations, and the budget for their activities is subsumed by the supported unit and cannot be separately identified. See appendix II, table 2 for the fiscal year 2012 budget.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>For the purposes of this report, we will refer to the reserve component general purpose force as "reserves," and we will refer to the active duty special operations forces as "special operations forces."

(FOUO) The MISO community consists of approximately 7,000 Army soldiers, with additional support from smaller Marine Corps and Air Force contingents. In 2006 the Secretary of Defense ordered the Army MISO community to undertake an organizational restructuring that resulted in the approximately 4,200 reserve MISO force—about two-thirds of the total Army MISO force—becoming general purpose forces under administrative control of U.S. Army Reserve Command, and about 2.800 active duty soldiers remaining under the administrative control of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command. Prior to the reorganization, the reserves were designated as special operations and fell under the control of U.S. Army Special Operations Command. The committee report3 accompanying a proposed bill for the Department of Defense Appropriations Bill, 2012 directed the Secretary of Defense to submit a description of current MISO activities, and the conference report4 accompanying the National Defense Authorization Act of 2012 directed the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict in coordination with the Commander of Special Operations Command (SOCOM) to report on, among other things, DOD's MISO force structure requirements. DOD's report was released in August 2012 and discussed the current and future force structure requirements and funding, among other things. It identified constraints regarding the equipment used by the Army reserves as well as efforts to shift MISO programs currently funded by overseas contingency operations funds to baseline funding; however, the report did not propose any recommendations for the issues addressed.

This report is part of a series of studies we are conducting on DOD's communication synchronization efforts<sup>5</sup> at your request. In May 2012, we issued a report that reviewed DOD's approach to communication synchronization, the initial actions that DOD has taken to implement this approach, and DOD's plans to reflect the roles of its interagency partners

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>H.R. Rep. No. 112-110, at 55-56 (2011).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>H.R. Rep. No. 112-329, at 712-713 (2011).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>DOD formerly referred to communication synchronization as "strategic communications." Since the release of our May 2012 report, DOD has issued a memo stating that the term strategic communication should no longer be used, as it is creating confusion. Instead, future Joint Publications will use the term "communication synchronization," and we have adopted that terminology for use in this report.

in communication synchronization.<sup>6</sup> We reported, for example, that DOD has taken steps to ensure that top leadership is driving the process to integrate communication synchronization throughout the department, and we identified that interagency coordination could be applied throughout DOD to support the communication synchronization process. The committee further requested more detailed information on DOD's communication synchronization efforts, specifically MISO activities and organization. This report examines the extent to which DOD (1) coordinates its MISO programs with other U.S. government efforts ongoing in individual countries and in various regions around the world,<sup>7</sup> (2) tracks information on and evaluates effectiveness of MISO activities, and (3) is organized to train and equip MISO forces to effectively support the combatant commanders during contingencies.

To conduct our work we reviewed a wide range of DOD documentation, including MISO policies and plans, as well as the August 2012 DOD report to Congress on MISO organizational structure, policy, and strategy. We interviewed DOD officials involved with MISO from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Joint Staff, SOCOM, U.S. Army Special Operations Command, MISO Command, U.S. Army Reserve Command, Office of the Chief Army Reserve, U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command, Headquarters Department of the Army, 1st Information Operations Command, Marine Corps Information Operations Command, Air Force Information Operations Division, and the 193rd Special Operations Wing. To better understand how MISO activities are implemented, we met with all MISO groups and battalions under the MISO Command, under SOCOM, and all MISO groups and three MISO battalions selected due to their diverse geographic locations under the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command, under U.S. Army Reserve Command. The views expressed cannot be generalized to all of these units but they provided insights about training. implementation, and measurement of MISO activities. We also

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>GAO, DOD Strategic Communication: Integrating Foreign Audience Perceptions into Policy Making, Plans, and Operations, GAO-12-612R (Washington, D.C.: May 24, 2012).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>For the purpose of this report, we use the term regional when describing activities that span multiple countries across a given geographic region.

interviewed officials at the Department of State (State) and three U.S. embassies.8

(FOUO) To assess a range of MISO activities, interagency coordination. and program evaluation we reviewed MISO from a global perspective. We received responses to written interview questions from officials in each geographic combatant command and its associated theater special operations command.9 Additionally, we selected several locations to discuss and observe MISO in depth: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Colombia, Djibouti, and Nepal. At each location we spoke to the Military Information Support Team (MIST) and reserve psychological operation elements (when available). In Bangladesh, Colombia, and Nepal we also spoke with U.S. embassy officials about their perspectives on and relationships with MISO within their respective countries. We selected these locations due to their different geographic regions, longevity in which the MIST has been operational, number of assigned MISO personnel, amount of budgetary resources allocated, and management structure. Our selection of locations is not representative of all MISTs and information received during these visits is not intended to be generalized to all MISO activities.

(FOUO) To better understand how DOD's embassy and website MISO programs are coordinated, we reviewed DOD documents, such as the Trans-Regional MISO Program and Trans-Regional Web Initiative policies, Trans-Regional Web Initiative certification memos, and the Trans-Regional MISO Program directive on how coordination within DOD and with the interagency is directed. We also met with relevant officials to learn how DOD command elements direct coordination on country and regional programs and how embassy officials coordinate with the MISTs' country specific programs and their involvement in DOD's regional websites. To better understand how MISO is tracked and evaluated, we reviewed DOD's directive and guidance on planning and evaluating MISO

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>Bangladesh, Colombia, and Nepal.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup>The six geographic combatant commands are Africa, Central, European, Northern, Pacific, and Southern Commands. Each geographic combatant command, with the exception of Northern Command, has a subordinate theater special operations command.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup>Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3110.05E (Sept. 30, 2011); Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, Trans-Regional Web Initiative Policy (Aug. 3, 2007); Certification Report for the Trans Regional Web Initiative (Sept. 12, 2012); U.S. Special Operations Command Directive 525-11, U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) Trans-Regional MISO Program (TRMP) (Jan. 17, 2013).

**(FOUO)** activities as outlined in Trans-Regional MISO Program authorizing memorandum. We also reviewed Prospector, DOD's classified database for compiling MISO program information, to determine what type of information DOD tracks and what programs are included. To better understand how MISO forces are organized, trained, and equipped, we reviewed DOD's strategy<sup>11</sup> and directive for MISO. We also analyzed how DOD supports both special operations and reserve MISO forces, to include numbers of support personnel at the MISO Command and training organizations.

We conducted this performance audit from May 2012 through April 2013 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. More details about our scope and methodology are included in appendix I.

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#### Background

The Role of MISO within DOD's Communication Synchronization Efforts

**(FOUO)** DOD recognizes the importance of being deliberate in its efforts to communicate and engage with foreign audiences, and it includes MISO as part of its overall communication synchronization efforts. Previously identified as "strategic communication," in November 2012, DOD issued a memo stating that this term should no longer be used as it is creating

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup>U.S. Special Operations Command Military Information Support Operations Command Strategy, (Mar. 14, 2012).

(FOUO) confusion; instead, future Joint Publications will use the term "communication synchronization." Further, the department's informationrelated community, to include MISO, should ensure that its efforts are closely synchronized to ensure planned intentions are reflected in every product. MISO are planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals in support of U.S. government and DOD objectives. More simply stated, MISO practitioners use information and actions to influence foreign audiences to change their behavior to be favorable to U.S. interests. MISO supports DOD's effort to synchronize communication themes, messages, images, and actions by influencing foreign audiences in support of U.S. military objectives. According to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3110.05E, MISO should be coordinated with the interagency to ensure operations are mutuallysupportive and complementary. Moreover, DOD officials state that coordinating with interagency partners is an important component of the communication synchronization process, and MISO teams located in embassies are instructed to coordinate closely with country teams<sup>12</sup> before communicating with foreign audiences to avoid making missteps with the host nation.

#### **MISO Organization**

(FOUO) The current MISO force structure consists of a mix of forces from SOCOM and the Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps. 13 The office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict develops, coordinates, and oversees the implementation of DOD policy for MISO activities and reviews, evaluates, coordinates, and oversees MISO plans, programs, and resources to ensure adherence to approved policy and planning guidance. SOCOM is the proponent for DOD's MISO, and as such is responsible for integrating and coordinating MISO capabilities to enhance interoperability and for supporting combatant commanders with MISO planning and execution. The Special Warfare Center and School conducts training for both active duty and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup>A country team is led by the U.S. ambassador or the deputy chief of mission and is comprised of the heads of all embassy sections and each U.S. government agency located at the embassy. The country team coordinates the activities of U.S. agencies overseas.

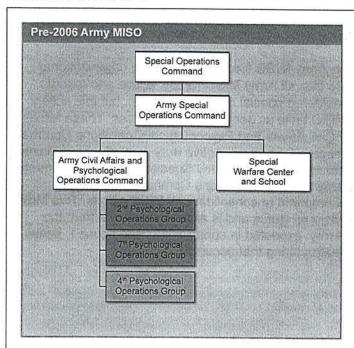
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup>The Navy does not have MISO forces.

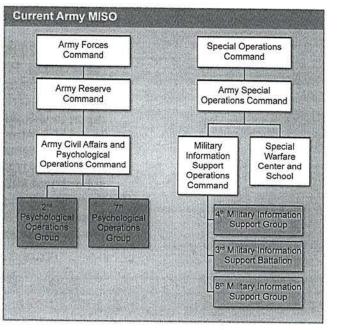
(FOUO) reserve MISO students. The current Army MISO force structure includes the majority of MISO forces and has units assigned to both the active Army and Army reserve. The active Army MISO special operations force consists of approximately 2,800 soldiers, and the Army reserve MISO general purpose force consists of approximately 4,200 soldiers.<sup>14</sup>

(FOUO) In 2006, the Army MISO force underwent an organizational restructuring. Prior to this, all Army MISO forces, active and reserve personnel, were considered special operations forces, but this action realigned reserve MISO units as general purpose forces. These forces report to U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command under U.S. Army Reserve Command. Active duty Army forces remained special operations forces under U.S. Army Special Operations Command. In 2011, the U.S. Army Special Operations Command created a subordinate MISO Command to consolidate all MISO efforts. This MISO Command is in provisional status and is awaiting approval from the Department of the Army, expected in spring 2013. See figure 1, below, for the organizational restructuring that occurred.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup>In addition to the Army, the U.S. Marine Corps MISO force currently consists of 41 Marines, with a planned expansion to 77 Marines by fiscal year 2015. The U.S. Air Force has no organized MISO units, but it does have 35 behavioral scientists who are assigned to Air Force commands as operational planners. The U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command also has an 800-reservist airman Special Operations Wing assigned to the Pennsylvania Air National Guard, which operates a fleet of seven multipurpose aircraft that have the ability to conduct airborne MISO operations.

Figure 1: Army MISO Organization, Pre-2006 and Current FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY





Active duty unit

Source: GAO analysis of DOD documentation.

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(FOUO) Note: Following the organizational restructuring, the two reserve MISO groups—the 2nd and 7th Psychological Operations Groups—remained under U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command, which was moved under U.S. Army Reserve Command. The active duty MISO group—the 4th Psychological Operations Group—no longer reported to the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command and instead reported directly to U.S. Army Special Operations Command. With the creation of the 2011 MISO Command, the 4th Psychological Operations Group was renamed the 4th Military Information Support Group and divided into the 8th Military Information Support Battalion.

Military Information Support Operations (MISO) Programs

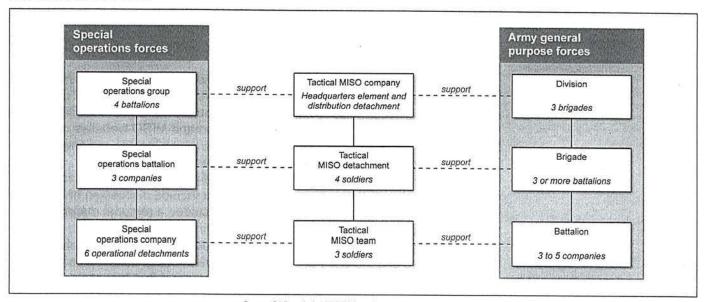
**(FOUO)** During operations, the Army reserve MISO forces support general purpose forces while the active duty MISO forces support special operations forces. For example, during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, MISO soldiers have conducted activities such as dropping leaflets to inform adversary forces of how to surrender, airing localized

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(FOUO) radio broadcasts to explain U.S. military operations in a favorable light, collecting local propaganda, and devising a counter propaganda campaign. MISO personnel generally deploy as three- or four-soldier tactical MISO teams and detachments, supporting a battalion or brigade, respectively (see fig. 2). Because the soldiers in tactical MISO teams and detachments are attached to supported units during operations, the budget for their activities is subsumed by the supported unit and cannot be separately identified during operations.

Figure 2: MISO Organization and Alignment During Operations

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Source: GAO analysis of DOD information.

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(FOUO) Currently located in 22 embassies worldwide, MISTs are comprised of 2 to 10 special operations forces soldiers and deploy to U.S. embassies for 6 to 8 months. During peacetime operations, MISTs are deployed at the request of both the geographic combatant command and respective ambassadors. MIST locations are prioritized first by DOD's decision framework for making global assignment and allocation recommendations, and then by SOCOM and theater special operations command priorities. In general, their mission is to erode support for extremist ideologies and deter tacit and active support for violent

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(FOUO) extremist organizations. MISTs implement activities that include building host nation capacity to conduct MISO and MISO-like activities, leading programs to instill confidence by local populations in their law enforcement, and supporting programs that offer rewards for information, among others. MIST activities are governed by two guiding documents. SOCOM's authorizing memorandum guiding MISO counterterrorism activities, known as the Trans-Regional MISO Program, is the overarching authority under which combatant commanders plan and execute MISO to support the global war on terror. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3110.05E provides strategic direction for inclusion of MISO to support the full range of military operations and identifies pre-approved MISO programs for the combatant commands, including stability operations, security cooperation, maritime interdiction operations, noncombatant evacuation operations, humanitarian operations, counterdrug, force protection, and counter illicit trafficking.

(FOUO) At the regional level, each geographic combatant command operates a MISO website for its respective region. SOCOM's Trans-Regional Web Initiative establishes a centrally managed website architecture where these combatant command MISO websites operate. SOCOM currently manages ten websites, which include regional articles that highlight the positive aspects of region and host nation counterterrorism efforts as well as highlighting the negative impact of adversaries' actions. The websites do not include discussion of U.S. or DOD policy. An additional MISO effort includes a regional magazine initiative, which supports the production of a magazine for each geographic combatant command designed to inform foreign nation militaries and increase their counterterrorism capabilities. Further, SOCOM supports a global assessment program that focuses on in-depth target audience analysis of countries with MIST presence. The countries are selected in response to interest from their theater special operations commands, how well they fit into National Security Staff priorities, the accessibility of local populations for polling, and State Department approval.

MISO Programs Are Generally Well Coordinated in Individual Countries, but the Regional Websites Are Not Well Coordinated With Interagency or Other DOD MISO Efforts (FOUO) According to State officials and observations at the embassies we visited, we found that DOD's country-specific MISO programs are usually well coordinated with other U.S. government efforts through the embassy country team. However, coordination on regional news websites sponsored by DOD does not include country teams and is not well coordinated with other MISO programs. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3110.05E notes that DOD's MISO should be coordinated with interagency partners to ensure operations are mutually-supportive; otherwise, DOD risks putting resources toward efforts that are not complementary to U.S. government efforts or other MISO efforts.

Country-Level Efforts are Viewed Positively by Interagency Partners

(FOUO) Senior State Department officials from regional bureaus and at embassies we visited have consistently indicated that coordination on MISO efforts generally works well at embassies. State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development, and other agency officials we met with at the three U.S. embassies we visited consistently said that MISO forces were valuable members of their embassy's country team and that their resources and expertise added value to U.S. efforts to counter violent extremism. For example, senior officials from the U.S. embassy in Bangladesh spoke highly of the MIST's efforts to work with its overall team and of the programs it implements. Officials specifically cited the interagency nature of the MIST's approach to program planning, noting that the MIST pulled together several distinct activities from three government agencies into a holistic community policing program that is being implemented in 2012 and 2013. In another positive example, embassy officials told us that the Bangladesh MIST is working with the U.S. Agency for International Development and another DOD organization to incorporate counter-radicalization messages into disaster response exercises. In Peru, a top-level Drug Enforcement Agency official wrote a letter in February 2012 to the senior military commander overseeing the MIST praising the team and requesting continued MIST support for the complementary efforts in combating narcoterrorist activities of the Sendero Luminoso, or "Shining Path" terrorist organization.

**(FOUO)** The coordination efforts have improved recently, and senior State Department officials from the regional bureaus of Western Hemisphere Affairs, South and Central Asian Affairs, African Affairs, and Near East Affairs attribute this to DOD making more concerted efforts to

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(FOUO) coordinate MISTs' efforts. Officials said that both State and DOD are learning how to work together through increased training-including DOD efforts to familiarize MISO personnel with how to work with interagency partners—as well as the MISTs' better understanding of how they fit into an embassy structure. For example, senior State Department officials have been invited to the training of MISO personnel to increase State's awareness of the capabilities MISTs bring to an embassy and to give MISO students exposure to other agencies. In 2011, State's Public Diplomacy Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near East Affairs observed training at SOCOM's Special Warfare Center and School, where MISO training takes place, and spoke to MISO students on what to expect when working with State officials in an embassy setting. In addition, during their pre-deployment training, some MIST members take coursework at State's Foreign Service Institute to learn about working in an embassy environment and the roles and responsibilities of the various sections at each embassy. Moreover, State officials from the Bureau of Intelligence and Research said that they have helped MISTs learn how to conduct polling, and provided information on target audiences to MISTs prior to deployment, which has helped focus the MISTs' efforts. According to DOD officials, if funding is available, a MIST about to deploy to a country that has never had a MIST may be sent for a 2-week visit with the embassy to familiarize its members with the environment and to discuss potential activities the MIST will plan during its tour.

(FOUO) Interagency coordination at the embassies we visited was generally working well because the MISTs were closely involved with interagency partners in identifying activities and where to concentrate resources. Specifically, the MISTs' coordination was facilitated through embassy-wide country team meetings, which involved some U.S. government agencies represented at the embassy or through issue specific working groups, such as counterterrorism. The purpose of these forums was for agencies to identify common goals and objectives and identify opportunities for working together or leveraging each other's resources and expertise to execute programs. The MISTs, in turn, worked with the other U.S. government agencies to ensure that their goal of improving partner nations' ability to deter the spread of terrorism and violent extremist ideology is incorporated into appropriate activities. For example,

- **(FOUO)** In Colombia, the MIST was planning ongoing activities in support of the Ambassador's Colombia Strategic Development Initiative, <sup>15</sup> which highlights target areas in the country where U.S. government efforts should be directed. Further, in some targeted areas, the MIST had partnered with the Drug Enforcement Agency to promote DOD and the Colombian government's rewards program<sup>16</sup> in support of ongoing counterterrorist efforts.
- (FOUO) In Bangladesh, the U.S. Agency for International Development and the MIST used past results from the MIST's Vulnerable Population Survey<sup>17</sup> to identify regions of the country for focusing ongoing U.S. government efforts. Further, we observed how the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Department of Justice's International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program, and the MIST combined elements of existing programs together to implement a community policing program (see fig. 3) in 2012 and 2013. In another target area, the Bangladesh MIST has augmented the U.S. Agency for International Development's Coastal Crisis Management Centers by turning some cyclone shelters into dual purpose contingency response posts. The intent is for the posts to be used by the Bangladeshi government to orchestrate effective responses to natural disasters, and ultimately to deter local populations from turning to terrorist groups disguised as aid organizations during times of crisis.
- **(FOUO)** In Nepal, the Ambassador specifically requested that the MIST provide assistance with earthquake Disaster Risk Reduction activities, which it is currently in the early stages of planning in conjunction with the U.S. Agency for International Development Disaster Risk Reduction office and State. <sup>18</sup> Similar to Bangladesh, the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup>The Colombia Strategic Development Initiative outlines the U.S. priorities for assisting the Colombian government in achieving its security and development objectives.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup>According to DOD officials, DOD's rewards program provides monetary incentives in exchange for information that leads to the apprehension or detainment of terrorists or wanted persons.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup>The Vulnerable Population Survey for 2012 was still being implemented during our visit to the MIST. The 2013 survey is underway and scheduled to be complete in July 2013.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup>This request was made by the predecessor of the ambassador we met with. The current U.S. Ambassador to Nepal arrived in late 2012 and indicated that he was generally supportive of MIST efforts.