

## REPORT ON THE TRAINING OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES

FOR THE PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2016

The estimated cost of this report or study for the Department of Defense is approximately \$33,000 in Fiscal Years 2016-2017. This includes \$0 in expenses and \$33,000 in DoD labor.

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**U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) Program Annual Section 2011 Report to Congress**

In FY 2016, USSOCOM deployed U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) spanning the range of our core activities as directed by the Secretary of Defense. From working with indigenous forces and local governments, to improving local security, to high-risk counterterrorism operations – SOF are in vital roles performing essential duties in response to national and Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCC) requirements. The strategic operating environment continues to be increasingly interconnected and interdependent, requiring a special operations capability that is agile and ready for a broad range of contingency missions and engagement activities. Although the drawdown in Afghanistan has resulted in a smaller SOF footprint, SOF continues to be heavily tasked and deployed globally. The JCET program is critical to developing language and cultural expertise that is essential to the ability of U.S. SOF to operate in complex situations and to promote the security of the United States and its allies and partners. JCET events are overseas deployments of U.S. SOF units and personnel conducted under the provisions of 10 U.S.C. § 2011 to train with friendly foreign nation forces. In FY 2016, the USSOCOM JCET program decreased by six percent from last year due to greater global GCC demand for SOF support. The USSOCOM Global Special Operations Synchronization process provides the Commander, USSOCOM, a repeatable, defensible, and transparent process for the prioritization of high-demand SOF that allows him to exercise his command prioritization recommendations to the Secretary of Defense for sourcing of special operations requirements.

The primary purpose of JCET activities is to train U.S. SOF units in their mission-essential tasks, particularly foreign internal defense and unconventional warfare. These activities are also essential for U.S. SOF to build the capability to conduct combined operations in an unfamiliar environment, develop language skills, and gain familiarity with regional and local geography and culture. Many aspects of the training available through JCET activities prepare U.S. SOF for other types of missions, including humanitarian activities, disaster relief operations, and personnel recovery. The conditions under which JCET activities are conducted are key to their effectiveness, and cannot be duplicated in a simulated training environment on a military base in the United States. JCET activities also have important incidental benefits, including building and maintaining military-to-military contacts; gaining regional access with a minimal footprint; improving interoperability between U.S. SOF and partner nation forces; and enhancing partner nation forces' counter-terrorism (CT) abilities. These incidental benefits are achieved with relatively low risk, low cost, and low signature, and directly support the GCC's Campaign Plan, U.S. Embassy Country Integrated Action Plan objectives, and the National Security Strategy.

This report provides an overall summary of Section 2011 deployments for FY 2016. Additionally, the report provides an overview of SOF activities within each Combatant Command and the relationship of these activities to the GCCs' regional strategies. Also included is a summary of the type of training conducted and detailed information for each country deployment.

**U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and  
Special Operations Command, Africa (SOCAF)**

USAFRICOM, in concert with other U.S. Government agencies and international partners, conducts sustained security engagement through military-to-military programs, military-sponsored activities, and other military operations, as directed, to promote a stable and secure African environment in support of U.S. foreign policy. With 54 countries comprising the African region, USAFRICOM stands ready to promote stability and thwart aggression throughout its area of responsibility (AOR). To accomplish these theater strategic goals, the Commander, USAFRICOM, relies on SOF to provide the unconventional military options essential to the theater strategy of military-to-military activities and operational support to the Horn of Africa and Trans-Sahel regions.

SOCAF, located at Kelley Barracks, Stuttgart, Germany, is USAFRICOM's headquarters for special operations. SOCAF is a joint military organization, consisting of Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps SOF units either stationed in Europe or deployed from the continental United States (CONUS). SOCAF employed SOF in support of USAFRICOM-named operations in three primary areas on the African continent: Operations JUNIPER SHIELD, ODYSSEY LIGHTNING, and JUNIPER MICRON in Northwest Africa; Operation OCTAVE SHIELD in East Africa; and Operation OBSERVANT COMPASS in Central Africa. SOCAF's theater engagement strategy in FY 2016 had a slight increase in the number of JCETs executed and countries participating compared to the number of JCETs executed in FY 2015.

SOCAF executed Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) Exercise FLINTLOCK 16 in Senegal while providing command and control (C2) of JCETs and other events across the region, including in Mauritania. These events were invaluable training platforms that allowed SOF to train in and sustain both core and specialized skills while working closely with host nation forces. Using these assets, SOCAF forms multiple special operations engagement teams capable of conducting special operations throughout the USAFRICOM AOR. SOCAF provides the tools to engage friends, to confront adversaries, to respond to crises, and to prepare for future employment in areas that require the unconventional approach that only SOF can provide.

SOCAF participated in 25 JCET events in 11 countries during FY 2016.

**U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) and  
Special Operations Command, Central (SOCCENT)**

The USCENTCOM AOR includes 20 nations. USCENTCOM pursues a multi-faceted theater strategy to defeat regional aggression, promote stability, and deter conflict. To meet the distinct regional challenges of the theater, USCENTCOM's overall strategy takes into consideration the diverse cultural aspects of the region and the varying capabilities of the region's militaries. The strategy capitalizes on mutual trust and working relationships forged during the last half century. Although USCENTCOM has the capability to act unilaterally to defend U.S. regional concerns, long-term U.S. goals are best achieved by working cooperatively with our friendly regional populations in partnerships and coalitions.



SOCCENT, located at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, supports the regional strategy of the Commander, USCENTCOM, through a variety of operations, actions, and activities, including C2 of all JCET training events. SOCCENT's regional strategy cultivates mature insights into the people, cultures, and issues of the USCENTCOM theater of operations. Increasing SOF capability through intense and focused SOF-specific training via the JCET Program significantly contributes to the overarching long-term regional influence in support of USCENTCOM objectives, and provides daily support to the USCENTCOM regional strategy of working by, with, and through partner nation SOF. SOCCENT contributes as one of the supporting components to USCENTCOM's Engagement Strategy by utilizing theater-deployed enduring SOF and non-enduring CONUS-based SOF deployments to execute JCETs. In FY 2016, SOCCENT JCET execution decreased by 12 percent from FY 2015. GCC demand for SOF capabilities continues to outpace sustainable capacity. Operation INHERENT RESOLVE requirements will continue to evolve and require SOF-specific sourcing, reducing SOF availability to conduct JCETs.

SOCCENT utilized multiple JCET events occurring across nine countries throughout the region, providing SOF the ability to train in and sustain both core and specialized mission-essential task list (METL) skills while working closely with host nation forces to accomplish simultaneously the theater engagement objectives in a low-cost, low-impact manner. U.S. SOF substantially increased critical skills by training in Jordan, Egypt, Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, and Kazakhstan during multiple training events, which continued to sustain and promote U.S. and partner nation military-to-military relationships. Army Special Forces, Air Force Special Operations, SOF Military Information Support Teams, and Navy SEALs executed training in support of their wartime tasks while conducting combined training with these partner nations, allowing SOF to focus on their instructional training, coaching, and mentoring skills. These events fully supported the refinement of SOF skills, language immersion, cross-cultural communications, live training, and navigating the human and physical terrain unique to each country.

The ability of U.S. SOF to train across multiple geographic regions enables the application of skills and training through reinforcement on the ground and in locations where SOF may be called upon to execute or support future operations. In FY 2016, SOCCENT successfully executed C2 of these JCETs and other events throughout the region with theater-wide, country-based Special Operations C2 nodes and other forward-based SOF headquarters in theater. Completion of these 22 JCET events contributed to overall regional security by leveraging U.S. SOF training while fostering relationships with partner nation counterparts.

SOCCENT participated in 22 JCET events in nine countries during FY 2016.

#### **U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) and Special Operations Command, Europe (SOCEUR)**

USEUCOM defends the homeland forward and supports U.S. strategic interests by maintaining ready forces for global operations (unilateral or in concert with coalition partners), securing strategic access, enabling global freedom of action, enhancing transatlantic security

through support of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), promoting regional stability, and countering terrorism. USEUCOM's assigned AOR encompasses 51 nations.

SOCEUR, located at Patch Barracks, Stuttgart, Germany, is USEUCOM's headquarters for special operations. SOCEUR is responsible to the Commander, USEUCOM, for SOF readiness, targeting, exercises, plans, joint and combined training, NATO and partnership activities, execution of CT, and peacetime and contingency operations, and it exercises operational control (OPCON) of theater Army, Navy, and Air Force SOF.

SOCEUR successfully executed C2 of multiple JCETs and other Theater Campaign Plan (TCP) events throughout the region and, when feasible, grouped them under partner nation exercises and multilateral exercises, such as JCS Exercises, aligning multiple SOF activities and JCET events with high-priority USEUCOM SOF partners. SOCEUR SOF executed one of the largest exercises in the Baltic region led by Lithuanian partner nation forces, called Exercise FLAMING SWORD 16; participated in the Estonia-led SPRING STORM 16; and executed Exercise JACKAL STONE 16 in Georgia while providing C2 of JCETs and other events across the region, including in Croatia, Moldova, Poland, and Romania.

SOCEUR has provided C2 of numerous JCETs in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Romania in support of Operation ATLANTIC RESOLVE, focusing efforts with key partners in the region. The execution of these and all theater JCET events allows for SOF to sharpen and refine their skills in instructional training, coaching and mentoring, language immersion, and cross-cultural communications. In FY 2016, JCET execution in USEUCOM decreased by seven percent from FY 2015.

The 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment is a high-demand, low-density capability that is continuously synchronized through USSOCOM, SOCEUR, and USEUCOM in order to provide sufficient opportunity to support the overall USEUCOM TCP through the JCET program.

SOCEUR participated in 37 JCET events in 18 countries during FY 2016.

**U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM),  
Special Operations Command, Pacific (SOCPAC), and  
Special Operations Command, Korea (SOCKOR)**

USPACOM is the United States' oldest and largest military combatant command, with the mission to protect and defend the territory of the United States, its people, and its interests by promoting security cooperation with allies and partners, reinforcing the rules-based international order, responding to contingencies, deterring aggression and, when necessary, fighting to win. This narrative is set against the backdrop of the USPACOM AOR, which encompasses more than one-half of the earth's surface – approximately 105 million square miles. The AOR traverses 14 time zones, from the west coast of the U.S. mainland to the western border of India, and from the North Pole to Antarctica. The 36 countries that comprise the Asia-Pacific region are home to more than 50 percent of the world's population, three thousand different languages, several of the world's largest militaries, and five nations allied with the United States through mutual defense treaties. Two of the world's four largest economies are located in the region, along with ten of the fourteen smallest. The AOR includes the most populous nation in the world (China), the largest democracy (India), and the largest democratic Muslim-majority nation (Indonesia).

All SOF are assigned to USSOCOM, with SOCPAC exercising OPCON of all Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force SOF forward-based or allocated as directed by the Secretary of Defense and the Commander, USPACOM.

SOCPAC is the Theater Joint Special Operations Component Command (subunified) command as designated by the Commander, USPACOM, and it remains vigilant to respond to crisis and conflict while focusing on transnational and regional terror networks within the AOR. Instability in the USPACOM AOR is an ever-present danger, from terrorism to large-scale war. SOF must be ready and capable across the spectrum.

SOCKOR, a sub-unified TSOC, is designated to support U.S. Forces – Korea (USFK), and it continually prepares for the conduct of special operations mission sets within the Korean Theater of Operations. SOCKOR successfully executed C2 of multiple JCETs and other events on the Korean peninsula and, when feasible, executed them leading up to a multilateral exercise, such as JCS Exercises KEY RESOLVE / FOAL EAGLE, with high-priority units from the Republic of Korea (ROK). These events have had a global impact, enabling ROK forces to become exporters of security capabilities within Asia and Africa, to demonstrate the key role of U.S. SOF, and to develop critical relationships with key influencers by working with a range of partners on complex and demanding problem sets.

The total number of SOCPAC JCETs decreased slightly in 2016. However, there has been a 32 percent increase in the total number of SOCPAC JCETs since FY 2013. These SOF-unique training events prepared SOF to execute assigned mission-essential tasks to respond to crises in support of Commander, USPACOM objectives. Strong bilateral SOF and CT relationships continue to mature with allies, partners, and host nations, setting conditions to marginalize violent extremism and ultimately disrupt or deny violent extremist organizations' capabilities and safe havens. This was evident in the U.S. Government's response options during the Bangladesh Holey Bakery terrorist attack in July 2016. SOF aviation and ground forces already training within the AOR were re-missioned, placed on alert, and provided immediate strike options for any follow-on terrorist attacks against U.S. interests. JCET execution was critical in developing continued SOCPAC military-to-military relationships across the AOR with an increased focus on South Asia (India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and Nepal).

SOCPAC and SOCKOR participated in 77 JCET events in 18 countries during FY 2016.

#### **U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) and Special Operations Command, South (SOC SOUTH)**

The USSOUTHCOM AOR encompasses the entire land mass of Latin America south of Mexico; the waters adjacent to Central and South America; the Caribbean Sea and its island nations; European and U.S. territories, dependencies, and protectorates; and a portion of the Atlantic Ocean (excluding the Bahamas). Thirty-one countries and 10 dependencies (including territories over which the French, British, Dutch, and U.S. Governments exercise sovereignty) make up the AOR, encompassing one-sixth of the world's land area. More than 390 million people live



in the region. Official languages spoken in the region include English, Spanish, Dutch, Portuguese, French, Quechua, and Aymara. SOCSOUTH is a sub-unified command headquartered at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Florida, and is responsible for all U.S. SOF missions and activities in the USSOUTHCOM AOR.

U.S. SOF under OPCON of SOCSOUTH support USSOUTHCOM objectives to secure the United States from threats, enhance hemispheric security, ensure cooperative partner nation relationships, enhance partner nation consequence management and disaster response, and enable effective partner nation exercise of sovereignty. Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) events are the primary means by which USSOUTHCOM "operationalizes" its regional security plan to address vulnerabilities presented by illicit trafficking networks and safe havens in the AOR. SOF support to TSC events forms a vital part of USSOUTHCOM strategic shaping efforts and is the primary means of building partner capacity, countering transnational threats, and ensuring domain awareness. The JCET program forms a cornerstone of SOCSOUTH's supporting engagement plan and is primarily focused on conducting combined training with CT and counter-narcoterrorist units of key partner nations.

In FY 2016, in response to changes in the operational environment, U.S. SOF shifted the focus of a significant portion of the JCET program from Central America to partner nations in the Caribbean – primarily the Dominican Republic and Trinidad and Tobago. In aggregate, JCETs in the Caribbean region accounted for approximately 40 percent of all JCETs executed in the USSOUTHCOM AOR in 2016. In addition, South America continued to receive increased emphasis in 2016, with particular focus on Peru and strategic partners Chile and Brazil. A key objective of USSOUTHCOM TSC efforts is to promote shared hemispheric security and stability interests. In 2016, JCETs conducted in Chile and Brazil cultivated this shared responsibility by reinforcing the perception of the United States as the security partner of choice and encouraging the exportation of regional security. Additionally, Brazil JCETs contributed to successful cooperative security efforts in support of the 2016 Summer Olympics. The total number of events executed in FY 2016 represented a 22 percent decrease from those executed the previous year. Despite this, the overall level of SOF engagements in the USSOUTHCOM AOR increased due to other SOF training and operational support. The JCET program will continue to be an essential component of SOF engagements, providing invaluable opportunities to develop the environmental and cultural expertise of regionally aligned SOF while promoting hemispheric security through the professionalization of partner nation security forces throughout the USSOUTHCOM AOR.

SOCSOUTH participated in 18 JCET events in 11 countries during FY 2016.

#### **U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) and Special Operations Command, North (SOCNORTH)**

The USNORTHCOM AOR encompasses the United States, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and the Bahamas. SOCNORTH is a sub-unified command under USNORTHCOM headquartered at Peterson AFB, Colorado, and is responsible for all U.S. SOF missions and activities in the USNORTHCOM AOR.

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SOF under OPCON of SOCNORTH support USNORTHCOM objectives to secure the borders of the United States from threats, enhance hemispheric security, ensure cooperative partner nation relationships, increase partner nation consequence management and disaster response, and enable effective partner nation exercise of sovereignty. Although currently not the primary means of engagement in the USNORTHCOM AOR, the JCET program remains a valuable tool for achieving SOF training objectives and improving partner nation relationships.

SOCNORTH participated in one JCET event in the Bahamas during FY 2016.

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HOST NATION PERSONNEL	U.S. SOF EXPENSES
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[illegible]

TOTAL COUNTRIES	68
TOTAL MISSIONS	180

Pages 11 through 57 redacted for the following reasons:

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(b)(3) (10 U.S.C. § 130c), (b)(3) (50 U.S.C. § 3024(i)), (b)(5)