

BRIEF HISTORY OF UNIT

~~(S)~~ (U)

The US ARMY INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT ACTIVITY (USAISA) was created after Iran Hostage Situation.

(U) During the Iranian Crisis, JCS responded to satisfy the critical need for detailed military intelligence by creating USAISA's predecessor, a joint organization known as the FIELD OPERATIONS GROUP (FOG).

(U) This was an adhoc organization composed of selected personnel who were trained to fill critical intelligence and operational units.

(U) JCS directed the Army to ration the unique capability developed during the Iranian hostage crisis.

(U) The Chief of Staff, Army authorized creation of the US Army Intelligence Support Activity on 29 January 1981.

2. (S) USAISA is the only unit in DOD specifically designed [redacted] to address unique military intelligence and special operations needs.

(S) Personnel are carefully screened prior to selection. Operational personnel are selected from volunteers [redacted]

(U) Training of operative personnel is among the most intensive in the US Army and includes:

(1) (U) The Assessment and Selection (A&S) course. A rigorous program designed to place the candidate for assignment to USAISA in a sufficient number of different physically and mentally stressful situations to provide assessment data to form the basis for a selection decision by the Commander.

(2) (S) The Core Training Course (CTC). The CTC is a comprehensive course designed to train newly assigned [redacted] A&S Graduates [redacted] prior to assignment to operational units, prepared to deploy to satisfy the USAISA operational mission.

[redacted]

3. (U) The unit structure provides for the extraordinary command and control maneuvers required to oversee the proper functioning of this unique

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~~SECRET~~ Background. The ill-fated attempt in April, 1980 to secure by military force the release of 72 Americans held hostage in Teheran, Iran revealed institutional shortfalls in US national intelligence and special operations capabilities. At the time of the initial rescue attempt, there existed nowhere in the national capability an organization to provide this vital support.

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~~SECRET~~ As the second effort matured, a formal force to conduct this intelligence operation, a combination of intelligence collection and operational support to a striking force, emerged in the form of the Field Operations Group (FOG).

FOG was prepared and in place to support a second rescue attempt when the hostages were released. FOG did not, however, disappear with the disbandment of the Iranian rescue force. Bridging a crucial gap in national capabilities to execute [REDACTED] nationally directed missions, FOG's capability was institutionalized in a DoD special unit to establish a worldwide, immediately responsive capability similar to that developed over a one year period in the Terhan crisis. FOG was redesignated as the Intelligence Support Activity (ISA) in March 1981.

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Its charter, approved by the National Security Planning Group, the Director Central Intelligence Agency, the Adjutant General and issued by the Secretary of Defense in July 1983, outlined three broad missions and placed extraordinary controls on use of the unit. In the two years following its emergence as a permanently chartered element, the roles and missions of ISA have not been reexamined. This paper addresses that task.

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