



DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY
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Dear Security Cooperation Colleagues,

It has been a tumultuous first half of 2020 with much having happened in our country and our world. I hope that you and your families are staying safe in these uncertain times. During this period of teleworking and virtual calls, the Security Cooperation Workforce Development Program (SCWDP) and the Defense Security Cooperation University have continued to progress. In this message I will share a few of the latest developments, and first I want to thank you for your dedicated support, curiosity, and energy around our efforts to codify Security Cooperation (SC) as a professional workforce in line with other workforces in the Department and broader federal government. SC plays a critical role in our National Defense Strategy, and it is time for us to elevate and invest in SC as a sought-after DoD career field.

On January 1st we began the transition year for the SC Certification Program. While still a work in progress, many of you have seized the opportunity while teleworking to get a jump on your required courses. Currently, over 1,200 personnel have completed all of their basic level certification requirements. I am impressed with your enthusiasm and support of this evolving program and would ask that you continue to complete training courses, when possible, in preparation for the mandatory certification period which begins on January 1st, 2021.

Last month, LTG Hooper hosted the second SC Workforce Development Senior Steering Board. Stakeholders from around the SC community participated in this productive event. I want to highlight a few notable discussion points.

- The board agreed to look at three new proposals submitted by the Military Departments. These were (1) to add a senior leader certification option, (2) to establish an executive-level committee to examine the creation of an SC Workforce Career Development Center, and (3) to explore developing an advanced SC course to train government and industry personnel to better compete in international acquisitions. All three of these illustrate that people across the SC workforce are looking at creative ways to improve the SC workforce capabilities and put in place programs that enable the workforce to rise to today's challenges.
- The one proposal the board declined was to add an option for SC Workforce members to obtain DSCU course credit from prior SC experience. We understand that for many of you, this is a topic of interest. Please know that we considered this point in detail both prior to issuing the guidelines and again before the latest Senior Steering Board. This program creates a new educational baseline, where everyone starts from the same foundational playing field. DSCA made a conscious decision not to allow credits for past experience for several reasons, including the addition of several SC focus areas (such as Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation) and feedback from other certification programs which revealed that grandfathering people in can erode the credibility of the certification. That said, it is our goal to make accessing and completing courses as simple and easy as

possible. We've designed the DSCU certification center on www.dscu.mil with these principles in mind, and are open to your feedback on how we can continue to improve your experience.

Workforce feedback is critical to DSCU and the SCWDP's success, and over the past several months, my team has reached out and gotten feedback from a subset of leaders from within the Services, Combatant Commands, and Defense Agencies. Our discussions focused on the vision for the SC workforce, and we gathered leadership insights regarding how they would like to see the SCWDP and DSCU support the SC workforce to reach this vision. Highlights from these discussions include the following future vision for the SC workforce and its impacts:

- There is a shared security cooperation language, culture, and identity that all SC workforce members can understand and reference.
- DSCU delivers tangible value to the global SC workforce - through easily accessed courses, information, thought leadership, and just-in-time advisory support. People are proud to be DSCU alumni.
- The SC workforce is better trained to understand the broader scope of global security cooperation, creating greater mission impacts, and resulting in the U.S. government being THE partner of choice.
- Our defense posture is better because we have trained and equipped partners that do the right things - so the world is more secure.

My team and I welcome additional input from across the SC workforce on core elements of the future SC workforce vision, and on how to make this vision a reality. Please contact us at www.dscu.mil with additional ideas, comments, or questions. My goal is to develop a continuous feedback loop with you all to ensure that we are constantly strengthening and focusing DSCU's services for the SC workforce.

On a final note, as many of you are aware, DSCA Director LTG Hooper will retire at the end of July after 41 years of dedicated service. I want to use this moment to personally thank LTG Hooper for the momentum he brought to developing the SCWD program and DSCU - and to thank him for his support and service. Many of you will likely begin to travel as restrictions are eased and as we enter the summer season. Please stay safe and consider your surroundings. We want to ensure we have a healthy and thriving SC workforce this fall. Thank you once again for all your hard work and dedication to the security cooperation mission!

Cara Abercrombie
President