

# *Defense Language Program*

## **Defense Language Office Overview**



*Presented to the  
Interagency Language Roundtable*

Ms. Nancy Weaver  
Director, Defense Language Office  
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# *The Need for Language & Cultural Transformation*

## *Building competencies for our 21st Century Total Force*

**DoD must be able to meet the demands of —**

- ❖ Global War on Terror/Long War
- ❖ Irregular Warfare
- ❖ Increased potential conflict zones
- ❖ Pursuing regional stability
- ❖ Building coalitions
- ❖ Humanitarian relief
- ❖ Transitioning to a robust expeditionary force



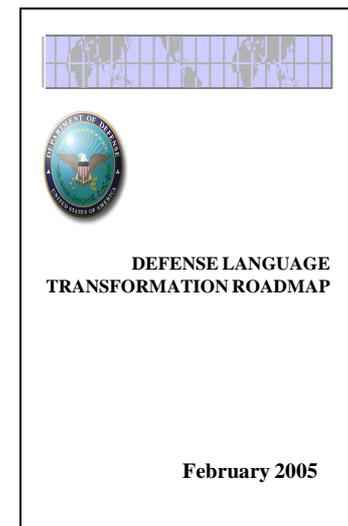


# Language and Culture Transformation

## *Changing the organizational DNA*

### ❖ **Language Transformation Roadmap established overarching goals and supporting actions**

- Directed by Strategic Planning Guidance (FY 2006-2011)
- Established 4 goals with 43 supporting actions
  1. Create Foundational Language & Regional Expertise
  2. Create the Capacity to Surge
  3. Establish Higher Levels of Proficiency in the Language Professional Cadre
  4. Expand & Improve Foreign Area Officer Corps
- Implementation timeline 2005 – 2008. . .86% complete

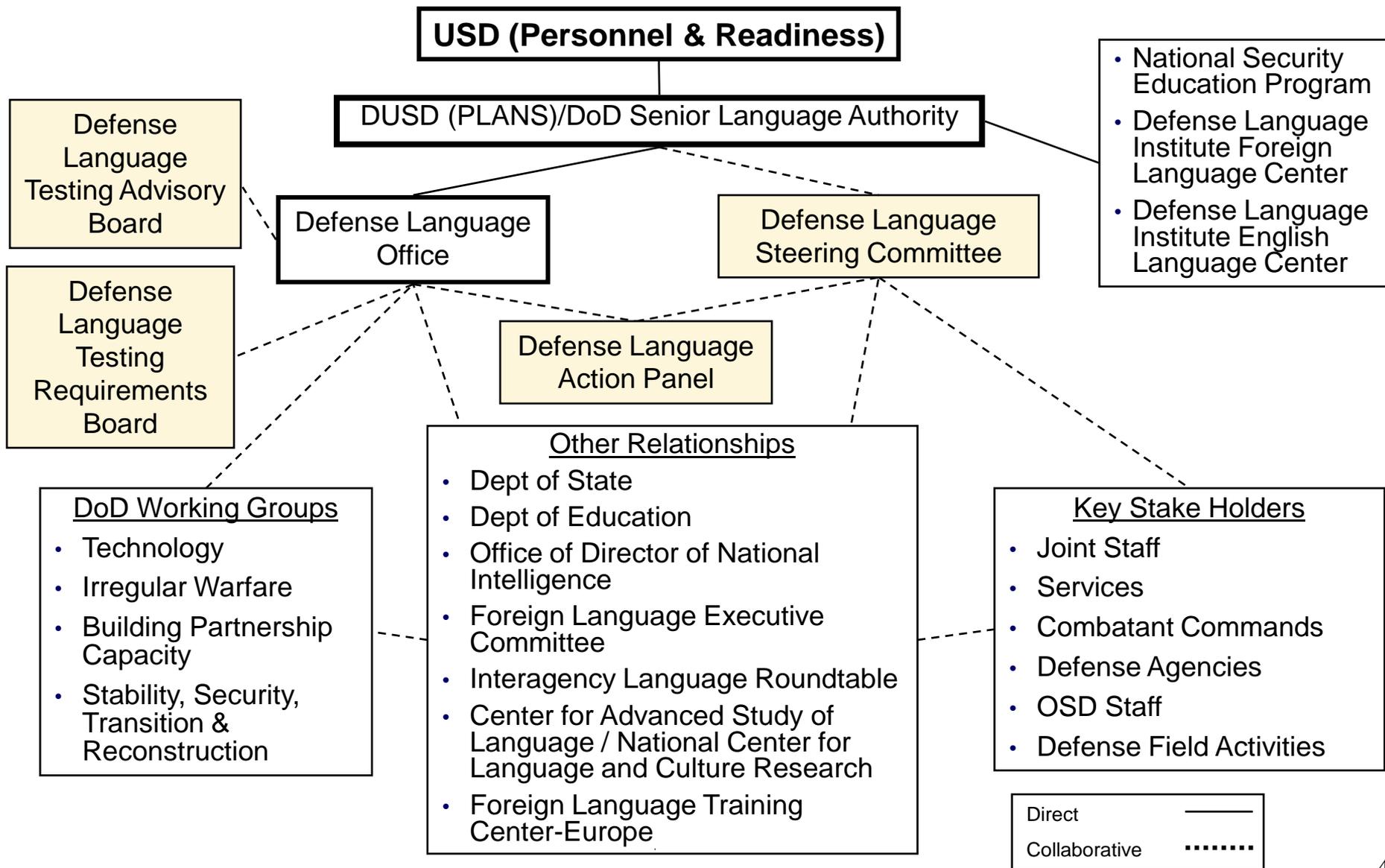


### ❖ **Other Initiatives that enhanced Language & Culture Transformation**

- 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review
- DoD “Top 25” Transformation Priorities
- National Strategic Language Initiative



# Defense Language Program Relationships





# *Building Language and Cultural Competencies*

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## *Defining assets and needs — filling the gaps...*

- ❖ **Identifying current capability through self-reported screening**
  - Over 250K members report foreign language skills...new members now screened during accession or hiring
  - 81% have skills in strategic languages — 34% when Spanish factored out
  - New language assets identified — over 12,000 Arabic, Dari, and Pashto
- ❖ **Determining language and regional expertise requirements**
  - Updating doctrine, policy, and planning guidance to include language and regional expertise
  - Defining needs — currently identified over 140K requirements
  - Refining validation process to ensure adequate sourcing
- ❖ **Language Readiness Index (LRI) matches assets to needs**
  - Tied directly to Defense Readiness Reporting System (DRRS)
  - Highlights potential gaps and shortfalls...allows risk assessment prior to action
  - Targets all assets, not just people in language or regional expertise-required specialties or positions



# *Building Language and Cultural Competencies*

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## *Building language as a core competency*

### ❖ **Established Service heritage-recruiting plans**

- Services developed heritage-recruiting plans
- Army 09L Interpreter/Translator Program became a permanent program in 2006; ~700 heritage speaking soldiers graduated, ~150 in training pipeline
- Civilian recruiting efforts include: reenergized branding and marketing materials; revamped “Go Defense” website
- DoD and Intel community partnering to reduce clearance processing barriers

### **Encouraging pre-accession language and culture study**

- Service academies now require 4 semesters of foreign language study for non-technical degree-seeking cadets/midshipmen
- Service academies and ROTC increased study abroad opportunities; foreign academy exchange and summer immersion programs offered in 40 countries; exchanges increased from 24 to 100 per academic year
- Proposed legislative language to allow incentives for language study by ROTC students



# *Building Language and Cultural Competencies*

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## *Building foundational knowledge*

### ❖ **Enhancing Education and Training**

- Strengthen language instruction; graduation goal 2+/2+/2 (Reading/Listening/Speaking) by 2011
- Embedding culture in all language training and Professional Military Education
- Using technology to enhance learning — streaming video, iPOD™

### ❖ **Providing “just-in-time” training**

- Deployed computer-based sustainment training
- Shipped ~ 900,000 Language Survival Kits to deployed units
- Conducted ~ 440 pre-deployment training events since 2001
- Trained 6,000+ deploying “Iraqi Transition Team” soldiers in basic Arabic skills

### ❖ **Strengthening the Defense Language Testing System**

- Requiring language aptitude screening for all accessions
- Implemented the next generation of language proficiency tests — uses authentic material to more accurately reflect language nuances
- Converting tests to a web-delivered format: currently offered in 48 languages — additional 26 by 2011; available at 450+ military locations



# *Building Language and Cultural Competencies*

*Building capability today to meet the unexpected . . . tomorrow*

## ❖ **Building Defense Language Volunteer Program**

- Civilian data base launched April 2008
- Military data base scheduled for late 2008
- Data bases capture volunteers only

## ❖ **Developed a 4-phase plan to meet emerging needs**

- Building new language tests to identify skills
- Producing web-delivered materials to refresh proficiency
- Developing resident short courses to increase proficiency
- Creating basic course curricula (to keep on-the-shelf) to ramp-up quickly





# *Building Language and Cultural Competencies*

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## *Developing a cadre with the right proficiency ... right numbers*

### ❖ **Identifying tasks and missions requiring higher proficiency levels**

- Established 3/3/3 as a goal for language professionals
- Reviewing military billets to accurately reflect language needs
- Zero-based civilian billet review validated language positions

### ❖ **Implementing training and career management plans to achieve and sustain higher proficiency levels**

- Strengthened DoD Joint Foreign Area Officer Program with improved selection, training, and utilization for the more than 1,600 members who are qualified, designated, or in training
- Studying linguist career path to improve utilization and retention
- Investing in language sustainment programs

### ❖ **Using Foreign Language Proficiency Bonus to encourage and sustain change**

- Incentivizing personnel to self-report, maintain, and improve their skills
- Authorized up to \$1,000 per month for high-proficiency in strategic languages
- NSPS allows payment for civilians not in language billets



# *Impact of Other Initiatives*

## *Quadrennial Defense Review supported overarching goals of Transformation*

### ❖ **Shifted language training focal point for officers to pre-accession**

- Directed the ROTC Language and Culture Grant Program
  - Encourages schools to provide ROTC students opportunities to study languages/cultures through innovative learning techniques
  - Awarding up to 50 ROTC schools three-year grants FY2007-2013
- Expanded cultural immersion opportunities and increased study in key languages at Service Academies; developed enrollment requirements in foreign languages for non-technical cadets and midshipmen
- Embedded Cultural and Regional training in officer Professional Military Education — expanding to enlisted courses as well

### ❖ **Supported sustainment training**

- Strengthen ongoing Cultural & Regional Training
- Using satellite technology for language maintenance
- Increased Pre-deployment training



# *Impact of Other Initiatives*

## *DoD Transformation priorities: strengthen language and culture*

- ❖ **DoD Transformation priority milestones emphasize cultural needs**
- ❖ **Milestones to be completed by December 2008**
  1. Publish a DoD Regional/Cultural Expertise White Paper
  2. Incorporate language and culture into doctrine and policy
  3. Embed cultural awareness in PME, and accession & pre-deployment training
  4. Establish a Language Readiness Index
  5. Sponsor a National Cultural Conference/Roundtable
  6. Continue to engage in National Agenda to increase language capability
  7. Establish FY10 funding plan for cultural programs
- ❖ **Success requires an integrated approach as actions — recommendations are interdependent**



# *There's More to be Done*

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*Moving ahead while evaluating progress made. . .*

- ❖ **Identify the different levels of support to meet specialized vs. general purpose needs**
- ❖ **Increase opportunities for English training to our partners & allies to help in Building Partnership Capacity**
- ❖ **Map “Way Ahead”: continue emphasis on language while strengthening regional and cultural competencies**

*and the journey continues...*



Deutsch

中国語

# QUESTIONS?

*Italiano*

*Español*

한국어

