

HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND
APO 09128-4209

STAFF MEMORANDUM
NUMBER 5-34

03 MAY 1995

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Translation Services

1. Summary. To establish policy and procedures governing the use of the Translation Branch.

2. Applicability. This Staff Memorandum applies to all Headquarters USEUCOM Directors/Office Chiefs.

3. Internal Control Systems. This Staff Memorandum contains internal control provisions and is subject to the requirements of the internal management control program. For HQ USEUCOM and subordinate joint activities, the applicable internal control directive is ED 50-8, Internal Management Control Program.

4. Suggested Improvements. ECJ1-AT is the proponent for this Staff Memorandum. Suggested improvements should be forwarded to HQ USEUCOM, ATTN: ECJ1-AT, Unit 30400, Box 1000, APO AE 09128.

5. Definitions.

a. Translation. The process or act of rendering a document from one language into another in written form; the product of such a rendering. An active translation is from the translator's native language into a foreign language; a passive translation is from a foreign language into the translator's native language.

b. Interpreting. The process or act of rendering speech from one language into another in oral form.

(1) Consecutive Interpreting. Interpreting during which a speaker and an interpreter alternate speaking, the interpreter rendering small blocks of speech into the

required language.

(2) Simultaneous Interpreting. Interpreting during which the interpreter renders the speaker's words into the required language without interrupting the speaker who continues speaking. Usually, a communications device is employed.

(3) Conference Interpreting. Interpreting, consecutive or simultaneous, at formal meetings, conferences, briefings or other events which require a specialized interpreter who is well-versed or an expert in the subject matter of the event.

6. General.

a. The Adjutant General Division provides linguistic services through the Translation Branch. There is only one translator. The known staff requirements form the basis for the identification and priority of services, the selection of the required skills in the translator, training and the purchase of reference materials. To accommodate the broad variety of materials submitted and the nature of the requirements, a flexible generalist is employed who is a multilingual translator instead of a bilingual interpreter.

b. Staff Requirements. Over the last ten years, the staff has required primarily active and passive German and a moderate amount of passive French, Italian and Spanish translation. In the same period, the requirement for active Spanish and French translation was minimal. The call for interpreting was almost nil. The Translator also received isolated

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requests for the passive translation of Dutch and Portuguese documents. Current services, training and reference materials have been tailored to these requirements.

c. Services. The Adjutant General Division offers:

(1) Active and passive translation service for German and Spanish.

(2) Limited passive translation service for French, Italian and Portuguese. (As used in this document, "limited" means limited by the availability of resources and references, the translator's opportunity to acquire the requisite technical information and the time available for project completion.)

(3) Limited consecutive interpreter service in German and Spanish.

(4) Certification of the equal authenticity of international agreements prepared in equally authoritative German, Spanish and English versions as required by DOD Directive 5530.3, "International Agreements," for those agreements for which a HQ USEUCOM staff office holds negotiating or concluding authority.

(5) Limited translation of Portuguese and Dutch documents into English on a case by case basis, however these translations cannot be considered authoritative.

7. Responsibilities.

a. Translation. The Adjutant General Division is responsible for providing translation services to the Headquarters staff in the conduct of official business.

b. Interpreting. The Adjutant General Division is responsible for providing limited consecutive interpreting services in German to the Headquarters staff in the conduct of official business. This means specifically:

(1) Facilitating conversations with guests or with workers and technicians on service calls within the Headquarters.

(2) Placing telephone calls.

(3) Reading prepared German-language briefings.

(4) Assisting at informal meetings, providing that the translator is well familiar with the areas to be covered.

(5) Simultaneous or conference interpreting service is not available.

8. Policies.

a. The Translation Branch is prohibited from providing service for the conduct of personal affairs (marriage or divorce actions, immigration, bills, medical diagnoses, legal notices, etc.) or to offices outside HQ USEUCOM, the associated units or tenant activities, unless specifically authorized by support agreement. The Translator can provide the names and addresses of a number of commercial services, but is prohibited from recommending any particular service.

b. Courtesy translations (translations of documents provided along with the official English text) can be provided, but this is not encouraged. Official correspondence with foreign military or governmental offices ordinarily will be in English. Correspondence within NATO always will be in English.

c. SM 5-7, "Preparing and Managing Correspondence," notwithstanding, the Translation Services Branch follows the appropriate foreign formatting and courtesy conventions in the preparation of foreign language correspondence for the sake of accuracy, intelligibility and protocol, unless otherwise instructed by the requestor.

d. When TDY travel is required,

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the requesting directorate or office will provide the TDY funds for the translator.

9. Procedures.

a. Translation.

(1) Submit requests for translation directly to the Translator. No particular request form is required.

(2) Requests sent through distribution will at least provide the name, telephone number and/or e-mail address of a POC for notification, and in case the Translator requires further information. If the translation is required on disk, by LAN, or by a certain date or time, this should also be stated.

b. Interpreting. Requests for interpreting will be coordinated with the Translator in person. See paragraph 4b(1) through (5) for the scope of the services offered. See paragraph 5d for services involving TDY travel.

c. VIP/Foreign Visitors. When foreign visitors come to the Headquarters, the linguistic aspects must be considered well in advance of the visit. The following applies:

(1) The action officer for the visit will determine whether briefings will be presented in a foreign language, whether interpreter assistance will be required and whether paper copies of the briefings will be given to the guests.

(2) If linguistic services are then desired from the Translation Branch, the action officer for the visit will first coordinate this aspect with the Translator and then communicate the results to the individual briefers.

(3) Briefers will assure that their briefings are submitted for translation in a timely fashion. The actual time depends on the length and technical difficulty of the briefing

as well as the overall number of briefings to be delivered.

(4) Briefers are responsible for having visual aids prepared. When these are to be translated, they must be submitted with time to allow for their preparation and, if desired, a subsequent review by the Translator. Bear in mind that the graphics specialists do not necessarily speak the language of the slides they are preparing.

(5) The visit action officer in coordination with the briefer is responsible for finding language-qualified officers to deliver the briefings. The Translator will gladly read the German briefings he or she prepares, but it is not customary to have a civilian briefer. The Translator will also be happy to listen to and coach those briefers who desire it.

d. Translation/Certification of International Agreements.

(1) The translation of international agreements (MOA'S, MOU's, etc.) from English into the foreign language(s) will be requested by the action officer from the foreign counterpart. The English and foreign version(s) are then compared and certified by the Translation Branch. Conversely, original Spanish or German versions of such documents can be translated into English by the Translation Branch. The Translator will then certify his or her own translation.

(2) The above procedure assures a native and accurate translation of important documents which will become legally binding for the U.S. government. It also saves time and complications for the negotiators, since non-native, active translations are always subject to wholesale editing by native reviewers who, naturally, are closer to the subject matter in his or her own language. The consequence is that several reviews for linguistic accuracy are required instead of a single review.

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(3) When the English translation of an agreement has been prepared externally, original and translation must be submitted prior to their signing and with enough time to allow a thorough review, possible revision and coordination with the foreign counterpart prior to the anticipated signature ceremony. Even if agreements are already signed, the Translation Branch cannot certify a translation as authentic when it is not.

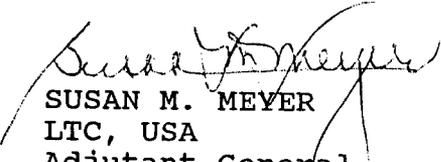
(4) Certification is valid for the document as presented to the Translator. Draft documents will be noted as draft documents in the certification. Thus it is important to present the final document, if you wish it to be certified.

(5) The Translator will be happy to review draft translations of agreements during negotiations in order to adjust them linguistically.

e. Turnaround Time. There is no rule of thumb on turnaround time for

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OFFICIAL:


SUSAN M. MEYER
LTC, USA
Adjutant General

DISTRIBUTION:

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translations, since this depends on workload, length and technical difficulty of the document and the availability of reference materials. The Translator will make every effort to return documents as quickly as possible. Every effort should be made to get the request in as early as possible. If time is short and the document is moderately long, the "nearly final" document which is still awaiting final approval should be submitted. The translation can then be modified upon final approval of the original.

f. Directors/Office Chiefs are requested to provide advance notice of events or major projects requiring the Translator's services.

g. Comments/Conflicts. The Translator is responsible for the coordination, prioritization and delivery of linguistic services. Comments regarding service or conflicts which cannot be resolved with the Translator will be referred to the Adjutant General.

R. F. KELLER
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Chief of Staff