



U.S. Special Operations Command: " An Overview of U.S. Special Forces "

Edited by Paul F. Kisak

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The United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM or SOCOM) is the Unified Combatant Command charged with overseeing the various Special Operations Component Commands of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force of the United States Armed Forces. The command is part of the Department of Defense and is the only Unified Combatant Command legislated into being by the U.S. Congress. USSOCOM is headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida. The idea of a unified special operations command had its origins in the aftermath of Operation Eagle Claw, the disastrous attempted rescue of hostages at the American embassy in Iran in 1980. The ensuing investigation, chaired by Admiral James L. Holloway III, the retired Chief of Naval Operations, cited lack of command and control and inter-service coordination as significant factors in the failure of the mission. Since its activation on 16 April 1987, U.S. Special Operations Command has participated in many operations, from the 1989 invasion of Panama to the ongoing Global War on Terrorism. USSOCOM conducts several covert and clandestine missions, such as direct action, special reconnaissance, counter-terrorism, foreign internal defense, unconventional warfare, psychological warfare, civil affairs, and counter-narcotics operations. Each branch has a Special Operations Command that is unique and capable of running its own operations, but when the different special operations forces need to work together for an operation, USSOCOM becomes the joint component command of the operation, instead of a SOC of a specific branch. This book gives a comprehensive overview of The U.S. Special Operations Command.

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