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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE SURVEY

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Armed Forces

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE SURVEY PUBLICATIONS

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GUATEMALA

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Armed Forces

A. Defense establishment

Both the government and armed forces consider leftist insurgency the greatest threat to the country. Consequently, the military emphasizes the development and maintenance of its internal security capabilities rather than the establishment of a defense force to combat possible attack from outside. Neighboring countries are not regarded as serious external threats; during modern times, there has been no sustained invasion by a foreign country, and the border disputes with other Central American countries and Mexico have resulted in only minor skirmishes. The armed forces, the most important organized group in Guatemala, consist of a ground element, an air force, and a navy. These forces, officially designated the Guatemalan Army, are capable of controlling riots and of defending the national territory against neighboring countries, with the exception of Mexico. In view of the importance of the internal security role, the ground force has 94% of the armed forces strength, and the bulk of the army's troops are deployed in and around the capital, Guatemala City, and in the Lago de Izabal-Zacapa area, where Communist insurgents have been active since 1960. The resulting reduction in internal security capability in other areas of the country is partially counterbalanced by the rapid-deployment capability of the Parachute Infantry Battalion, a well-trained and well-equipped combat unit. (C)

The armed forces are capable of containing localized rural insurgency, but they would not be able to conduct simultaneous effective counterinsurgency operations in several localities. Military capabilities for counterinsurgency in remote areas have improved greatly through continuous training and especially

through the 1972 counterinsurgency operations in isolated jungle areas. Units participating in those operations were rotated, so that all army combat units obtained counterinsurgency experience, and the air force provided transport, gaining experience in coordination with army operations. These operations forced rural insurgent elements to become largely inactive. Army intelligence, planning, and operation procedures have improved, and the army now is able to support reinforced company-sized jungle operations and should shortly be able to field battalion-sized units. The logistic system, however, could not support extended, large-scale counterinsurgency operations. (S)

Major equipment of the 12,300-man ground element consists of 97 75-mm howitzers, four 105-mm howitzers, 12 armored personnel carriers, 13 armored cars, and six M3A1 light tanks. The 370-man navy, which includes a marine company, is equipped with only minor craft (four patrol boats, six patrol craft, and one amphibious warfare craft) and could offer little resistance to a foreign attack. The 300-man air force element, with 45 aircraft, places its primary emphasis on support of the ground forces. (S)

Guatemala is a member of the Inter-American Defense Board, a signatory of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Pact), and a charter member of the Central American Defense Council. The council, which has its seat in Guatemala City, was formed in 1964 to achieve close cooperation among the Central American military establishments. Much basic planning has been accomplished, but little has been approved at national levels. Guatemala has a bilateral military assistance agreement with the United States, and its military are cooperative in all associations with the U.S. military. It generally has supported U.S. policies at the United Nations and within the hemisphere. (C)

I. Military history (C)

Historically, Guatemala's armed forces have been almost exclusively ground forces. They have shown little professional competence, and have devoted much attention to political affairs. Guatemalans

participated in the Army of the Central American Federation of 1825-39. During the rest of the 19th century, the armed forces were involved in political struggles, either for or against the government in power, and in international conflicts in Central America.

During the relatively progressive administration of President Justo Rufino Barrios (1873-85), several military improvements were made. A compulsory military service system was set up for male citizens 18 to 50 years of age. The Polytechnic Institute was inaugurated as the national military academy in 1873, offering military training and liberal arts subjects for men destined for military careers as officers. Some officers were sent to schools in the United States and Europe, and foreign military personnel were brought to Guatemala as instructors. A military hospital went into operation in 1881. Armed forces personnel strength reportedly reached 15,000 in this period.

During the bloody dictatorship of Manuel Estrada Cabrera (1898-1920), the armed forces were used as an instrument of terror. This reputation to some extent still clings to the present forces.

The military, on the whole, supported the dictatorship of Gen. Jorge Ubico (1931-44). After Ubico's overthrow, the officer corps suffered some division over the extremist reform policies of President Juan Jose Arevalo (1945-51). It was even more divided by the actions of the Communist-dominated government during the Presidency of Col. Jacobo Arbenz (1951-54). Anti-Communist elements have dominated the military establishment since the overthrow of Arbenz, which was largely brought about by the refusal of the armed forces to support his government against a small invading force of Guatemalan exiles. In 1963, President Ydigoras, who had permitted ex-President Arevalo to return to the country, was overthrown by the military in a move to prevent the possibility of Arevalo's reelection and a resurgence of Communist influence.

The air force was established by law as a part of the Guatemalan Army on 1 July 1929. It has remained a small force though gradually increasing to its present strength of 370 personnel.

Guatemala had a coast guard-type force for several decades until the present navy was created as a part of the Guatemalan Army by presidential decree of 15 January 1959. The navy has remained a small coastal patrol force.

U.S. military assistance to Guatemala began in 1956. The armed forces have not increased significantly in size since the beginning of the Military Assistance Program (MAP), but they have achieved important improvements in organization, equipment, and overall combat effectiveness.

2. Command structure (C)

The President, titular Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, exercises direct command over one of the major military units—the Presidential Guard—and is assisted by a military advisory and coordinating body, the Presidential Military Staff (Figure 1). The Minister of National Defense, traditionally a senior ground force officer, has responsibility for all other elements of the defense establishment and is the real commander of the forces. Directly subordinate to him is a Mobile Military Police force, a battalion-size unit, providing guard and police services in widely dispersed areas, and the nine Auxiliary Services—the Legal Department, Finance Department, Comptroller, Public Relations, Military Hospital, Ammunition Depot, Army Commissary, Military Recreation Centers, and Army Editorial Staff. The Vice Minister of National Defense is in charge of administrative

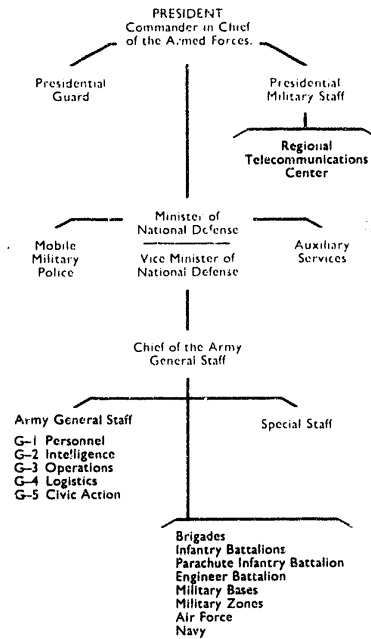


FIGURE 1. Organization of the Guatemalan military establishment (C)

activities concerned with the defense forces and also acts for the minister when the latter is absent. The Chief of the Army General Staff, who is directly subordinate to the Minister, is the formal commander of the armed forces, although the minister traditionally tends to bypass him and frequently deals directly with lower commanders, particularly on air force and navy matters. During a state of siege, the National Police come under the control of the Minister of National Defense.

The Army General Staff exercises staff supervision over the military establishment, although much of the staff activity of the navy and air force is performed within those services. It is organized into five sections: G-1, Personnel; G-2, Intelligence; G-3, Operations; G-4, Logistics; and G-5, Civic Action. The Chief of the Army General Staff also directs the Special Staff, which consists of the chiefs of the 13 Special Services—Quartermaster, Engineers, Ordnance, Medical, Signal, Chemical Warfare, Transportation, Military Justice, Military Police, Adjutant General, Cartography, Livestock and Farming, and Military Reserve.

The operational commanders, except for the Presidential Guard and Mobile Military Police, all are formally directly under the Chief of the Army General Staff. They head various ground force units—brigades, battalions, zone commands, and base commands—as well as the navy and air force. The individual service schools are subordinate to the Chief of the Army General Staff through G-3 Operations of the Army General Staff. There is legal authorization for activation of corps commands and of a National Palace Guard Command, but these units have not been activated.

B. Joint activities

1. Military manpower (C)

Estimates of the total available manpower by 5-year age groups and the maximum number fit for military service as of 1 January 1973 are as follows:

AGE	TOTAL NUMBER OF MALES	MAXIMUM NUMBER FIT FOR MILITARY SERVICE
15-19	300,000	170,000
20-24	261,000	140,000
25-29	229,000	120,000
30-34	203,000	100,000
35-39	167,000	75,000
40-44	129,000	55,000
45-49	101,000	40,000
Total, 15-49	1,390,000	700,000

The average number reaching military age (18) annually during 1973-77 is expected to be about 63,000.

Males between ages 18 and 50 are subject to compulsory military service. Registration for the draft is obligatory at age 18, but no attempt is made to insure that all eligible males have registered. The length of service for draftees and volunteers alike is 2½ years; approximately 3,000 men are drafted into service annually. Men enlisting in the reserves are exempt from the draft, and most upper-class youths join the reserves.

The reserve program is administered by the Special Military Reserve Command, created in 1970. Its commander is responsible to the Minister of National Defense through the Chief of the Army General Staff. Primary missions of the Special Military Reserve Command include directing, organizing, and training the reserves; recruiting personnel for the active duty forces and tactical units of the reserves; compiling the national census; developing civic action programs in conjunction with the G-5; and conducting civil defense operations.

Males between the ages of 18 and 30 who have completed active military service are transferred to the reserves but are not required to participate in any further training. Reservists without prior service are required to complete 2 years of training, conducted at each zone headquarters in weekly 3-hour drills. All reservists are carried in a standby reserve status until age 50. An estimated 35,000 reservists have completed either active duty or reserve training and are subject to call in case of emergency, but it is extremely doubtful that more than 22,000 would readily be available. With outside logistic support, mobilization capability is estimated as follows:

M-Day	13,000
M+15	14,000
M+30	24,000
M+90	35,000
M+180	35,000

Draftees, almost entirely Indians and mestizos (mixed Indian and white ancestry), have a high illiteracy rate (65% to 70%), and their training is slow. The social climate, with considerable class distinction, results in the recruits seldom displaying initiative. The armed forces also are handicapped by the constant turnover of conscript personnel and by the small size of the professional NCO corps.

Officer personnel are commissioned upon graduation from the Polytechnic Institute or upon successfully passing an examination after attendance

at a comparable foreign military academy. The Guatemalan armed forces have an officer-enlisted ratio of about 1:11.

Of the total of approximately 1,170 officers on active service, over 300 are colonels, and a high proportion of the remaining officers are also of field-grade rank. The military are gradually correcting this reversed-pyramid grade structure. The military academy has been enlarged and ideally could graduate about 60 cadets a year, although recent graduating classes have averaged about 25 per year. In addition, there has been an increase in the number of cadets studying in foreign military academies.

The morale of the officer corps is generally good, although the status of the officers has been deteriorating somewhat relative to other sectors of the society, principally as a result of low pay scales. There has been no military pay raise since 1958. The resulting living standards, somewhat low, are considered middle class. Candidates for the military academy are from middle or lower class families. Low pay scales also cause problems in the retention of specialist and NCO personnel. Morale among the Indian conscripts is generally good, but few desire to remain in the armed forces at the conclusion of their obligatory service tour.

Factionalism does not exist to any substantial degree in the armed forces. There are some extreme rightists in the military, but they are not in command positions.

The military have the constitutional responsibility to defend the "honor of the nation" and traditionally have interpreted it to include moral guardianship of the constitution. If governmental activity were considered to be unconstitutional, corrupt, or inept or were to threaten the survival of the military institution or the capability of the armed forces to perform their mission, there would be strong sentiment in the military for intervention in government. The military have not actually intervened in government since 1963, however, and the increasing emphasis on military professionalism and the gradual retirement of excess older officers are expected to reduce even further the tendency toward military intervention.

2. Strength trends (C)

Military strength levels have increased gradually during the 1960's and early 1970's. This augmentation in personnel reflects the expanded role of the military in curbing rural and urban terrorism and in performing civic action functions. The strength fluctuates with the annual induction cycle of

conscripts. About 94% of the personnel are in the ground forces, 3% in the navy, and 3% in the air force. Approximate strength data for the armed forces for selected years are as follows:

YEAR	GROUND FORCES	NAVY	AIR FORCE
1950	6,000	---	230
1956	8,000	---	250
1960	9,000	120	280
1965	9,900	110	310
1966	9,200	160	320
1967	9,900	195	280
1968	9,700	195	310
1969	9,150	195	325
1970	12,190	210	325
1971	12,190	290	325
1972	12,300	370	300

--- Not pertinent.

3. Training (C)

The G-3 Section of the Army General Staff is responsible for staff supervision over all military training. Training, generally poor, is handicapped by the low educational level of the conscript, shortages of equipment and facilities, and insufficient use of practical exercises. Except for some technical training in the United States and the in-country training conducted by U.S. military training teams, the majority of the training is on-the-job. The military schools provide instruction for all the services, although advance specialized training for navy and air force officers and for some enlisted specialties must be obtained abroad.

The Polytechnic Institute, located in Guatemala City, is the military academy of Guatemala. It provides six semesters of basic training for personnel of all arms and services, followed by more specialized instruction (Figure 2). This is followed by a 3-month training period at the U.S. Army School of the Americas, in the Canal Zone. As of May 1972 the school enrollment totaled approximately 290 cadets. Most officers are now graduates of the Polytechnic Institute.

The Military School of Arms and Services (*Escuela Militar de Aplicacion*) and the Center of Military Studies provide advanced training to officers from all services. The predominance of army subjects at the Military School of Arms and Services reflects the predominance of the ground element in size and influence over its navy and air force counterparts. Annually it conducts three to five basic infantry officer courses, one advanced infantry course, one artillery course, and several courses for noncommissioned officers. It has received considerable assistance from



FIGURE 2. Army field training exercise (U/OU)

the U.S. Army Mission. The Center of Military Studies was inaugurated in June 1970, reportedly to administer formal advanced officer training through the following courses—Command and General Staff, Application of Arms, and Application of Services.

Guatemala has been included in the U.S. Military Assistance Program since 1956, receiving both equipment and training assistance. The training has included counterinsurgency tactics, equipment maintenance techniques, medical corps instruction, and various phases of civic action. Many officers have received training in specialized fields in the continental United States and in the Canal Zone. A few Guatemalan officers also train at various times in service schools in Argentina, Colombia, El Salvador, France, Honduras, Israel, Italy, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Venezuela.

4. Military budget (U/OU)

The annual military budget is prepared in the Ministry of National Defense, forwarded to the President for review and approval, and, after incorporation into the central government budget, receives final approval from Congress. During the period 1968-71, budgets for the Ministry of National

Defense averaged about 11% of the central government budget (Figure 3). Throughout the 1960's, Guatemala's defense budgets increased on the average of 11% annually. The defense budget for 1970 increased more than 80% over the previous year, however, because of purchases of materiel for stepped-up counterinsurgency operations. The defense budgets do not show the allotment of funds on a service or functional basis.

5. Logistics (C)

Guatemala has little industrial capability with which to support its armed forces and is not self-sufficient in food. Manufacturing is small scale, dependent on imports of raw materials, machinery, and equipment, and is largely concentrated in the production of basic consumer goods. All types of petroleum products are produced except aviation gasoline and lubricants.

Domestic manufacturing in direct support of the armed forces is limited to quartermaster-type items. All other military equipment must be imported, and since 1962 the United States has been the principal source. From July 1953 through June 1971 the value of U.S. military assistance (MAP) to Guatemala amounted to US\$21.5 million, of which \$17.3 million was grant aid. In 1969 a substantial quantity of small arms was purchased from Spain.

The G-4 Section of the Army General Staff provides logistical support to all the armed forces. The section is organized into four departments and the office of the Inspector General for Maintenance. Each department does the planning, organizing, and execution of the work within its area of responsibility. The departments and their respective responsibilities are as follows: First Department—food, shoes, uniforms, medicines, surgical equipment, individual field equipment, and communications equipment; Second Department—motor vehicles, fuels, lubricants, engineering equipment, and machinery; Third Department—weapons, ammunition, explosives, and preservative articles; Fourth Department—items provided under the U.S. military assistance program.

FIGURE 3. Annual defense budgets (U/OU)

	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972
Defense budget (<i>millions of U.S. dollars*</i>)	15.7	16.2	29.4	18.1	18.9
Defense as percent of central government budget	10.1	9.6	15.3	8.7	7.5
Defense as percent of GNP	1.0	1.0	1.6	na	na

na Data not available.

*Converted at the exchange rate of 1 quetzal per US\$1.00.

The Inspector General for Maintenance, in coordination with the departments of the G-4 Section, is charged with the planning, organization, and execution of all phases of maintenance.

The Quartermaster Service of the Army was established in June 1970 and is directly subordinate to the Chief of the Army General Staff. Its primary function is to procure and distribute all things necessary for the mission of the army. Its organization comprises a troop unit command and seven sections: personnel and administration, accounting, supply and purchasing, warehouse, military stores, transportation, and customs. The service submits a weekly report to the G-4 of all articles received and expended.

The logistics system is barely adequate for normal peacetime operations. Support from external sources would be required for any sustained operation because of poor maintenance and a lack of funds, reserve supplies and equipment, and transportation facilities.

The supply system consists of central warehouses located in Guatemala City, and of small storage warehouses in various bases and ports throughout the country, where sufficient supplies are maintained for normal operations. Supplies are drawn from the central warehouses under a standard requisition system. Rush items and ammunition normally are flown by the air force to the various military units

throughout the country; routine items normally are transported via road and rail. Each military installation has a small post exchange.

C. Ground forces

The Guatemalan ground forces (Figure 4) have the primary mission of internal security. They are capable of handling riots and have shown themselves to be capable of sustained counterinsurgency operations in the field. This capability is enhanced by their operation of the primary armed forces telecommunications net. The ground forces conduct extensive civic action programs; these include building roads, drilling wells, operating medical dispensaries in rural areas, providing elementary education and hot lunches for school children, and providing entertainment and public information radiobroadcasts. (C)

The principal strengths of the ground forces are the physical endurance and amenability to discipline of the enlisted men and the alertness of the top command and the officers corps in general to adapt the organization, training, and equipment to the needs of the country, especially in the direction of improved counterinsurgency capability. On the whole, however, there are several shortcomings. Training, training aids, and training areas remain inadequate, and most of the enlisted men are illiterate at induction, lack initiative,



FIGURE 4. Army infantry troops on parade (U/OU)

and learn slowly. Moreover, the ground forces' programs are handicapped by the constant turnover of conscript personnel and by the small size of the professional noncommissioned officer corps. (S)

Most of the forces' modern arms and equipment have been obtained from the United States under grant and reimbursable military aid programs. There appears to be an adequate supply of small arms. M-1 rifles are issued to troops of the MAP-support units. Five thousand Spanish CETME G-3 NATO 7.62-mm rifles, received in late 1969, have been issued, principally to non-MAP-supported units. The Arana administration has placed increased emphasis upon the procurement of modern arms and equipment. Currently the army is actively seeking to purchase sufficient heavy weapons to equip two 105-mm artillery batteries and one 4.2-inch mortar battery, and sufficient .50-caliber quad-mounted anti-aircraft machineguns to protect air force facilities and aircraft at La Aurora International Airport, in the southern outskirts of Guatemala City. (S)

1. Organization (C)

The armed forces headquarters serves as the headquarters for all ground force elements except the Presidential Guard and Mobile Military Police, which are directly subordinate to the President and the Minister of National Defense, respectively. The major combat units—four brigades and five separate battalions, including the Parachute Infantry Battalion—are directly subordinate to the Chief of the Army General Staff, although the Minister of National Defense, who traditionally is a senior ground forces officer, exercises at least equal direct authority. Guatemala is divided territorially into six military zones and three military base commands, each directly subordinate to the Chief of the Army General Staff. The zonal headquarters are located at Guatemala City, Zacapa, Jutiapa, Quezaltenango, Santa Cruz del Quiche,¹ and Poptun; the military bases are at Puerto Barrios, San Jose, and Coban. The zone and base commands are responsible for all military matters in the political departments in which they are located. They also are responsible for administrative and operational control over all troops in their respective areas except for the following units with headquarters in Guatemala City—the Presidential Guard, the Mobile Military Police, two brigades, a Tactical Group, and combat support elements—which are directly under the Chief of the Army General Staff.

¹For diacritics on place names see the list of names at the end of the chapter.

2. Strength, composition, and disposition² (C)

The ground forces number approximately 12,300 active-duty personnel; this figure includes 2,470 specialists—ex-conscripts under contract as NCO-equivalent personnel assigned to technical duties which cannot be performed by the average enlisted conscript. Although these specialists are under complete military discipline, uniformed and armed, and participate with troops in field exercises and combat operations, they are not capable of assuming the role of well-trained field NCO's. The ground forces are organized into several effective combat units in and around Guatemala City and in those areas to the east where rural insurgency has been prevalent. The concentration of troops is greatest in the capital area. Elsewhere, units often are dispersed throughout a military zone in platoon-size detachments.

The combat units of the Guatemalan Army are four brigades (each containing as a major combat element a MAP-supported infantry battalion organized on the reduced Table of Organization and Equipment of a U.S. Army infantry battalion), four separate infantry battalions, and the Parachute Infantry Battalion (Figure 5). The latter, generally known as the Rapid Reaction Force, consists of two rifle companies (parachute-trained and MAP-supported), a special forces company, and one 60-mm mortar platoon and normally is stationed at San Jose. The combat support units consist of a MAP-supported engineer battalion, a signal company, and a medical company. In addition, there is the 400-man Tactical Group, stationed at La Aurora Air Base. This unit, armed with Spanish CETME 7.62-mm rifles and submachineguns and equipped with seven V-100 Commando armored cars and five M113-armored personnel carriers, has the mission of guarding the airfield. The 400-man Presidential Guard, committed to the protection of the President, is available to augment combat units.

The ground forces also include the battalion-equivalent Mobile Military Police, which is headquartered at Los Cipresales, in the capital. This 1,600-man force provides a 120-man guard unit for the National Palace. The remainder of this force is scattered throughout the country in small detachments (five to 20 men) functioning as small rural police units with the mission of assisting the civil police in law enforcement in remote areas. Recent legislation, however, has expanded the force's role to include the coordination of specific police activities throughout the national territory.

²For current detailed information see the *Military Intelligence Summary* and the *Order of Battle Summary, Foreign Ground Forces*, both published by the Defense Intelligence Agency.



FIGURE 5. Members of the Parachute Infantry Battalion check equipment prior to jump practice (U/OU)

Military reserve records are poorly maintained, and reserves who have completed active military service are not required to participate in training activities. It is estimated that Guatemala could mobilize an additional 22,000 men within 180 days. Reservists would require refresher training to be effective in combat.

3. Training (C)

Troop training is generally on-the-job, since requirements for ground force units in the field and for base security leave very few personnel available for formal training. The Jutiapa Training Center, established in 1968, is the first central training facility to be operated by the army. It trained only 500 of the 3,000 men drafted that year, but has increased its enrollment; in March 1972 it had 900 recruits in training. Training facilities and troop housing are deficient, but the army is working to remedy these weaknesses. All trainees receive 4 months of basic infantry training. Upon completion of this instruction, they are assigned to units throughout the army

without regard to aptitude demonstrated during the training period. Even with this formal basic training, the average soldier serves a full year before he has absorbed sufficient instruction to be considered adequately trained.

In addition to the Polytechnic Institute, ground officers advanced training is conducted at the Military School of Arms and Services and the Center of Military Studies.

The Adolfo V. Hall Institute, a military secondary school with sections in Guatemala City, San Marcos, Retalhuleu, and Zacapa, is operated by regular officers; students, all volunteers, pay tuition. The course covers a 5-year period, and graduates receive reserve commissions in the army.

D. Naval forces

The Guatemalan Navy, with a strength of approximately 370 men (including a 275-man marine company), has the mission of defending and maintaining the sovereignty of the country. Although the largest naval force in Central America, it is, in

effect, a small coast guard, possessing only eleven vessels. The navy is tasked with coastal and river surveillance operations; protection of port facilities, rivers, and coastal waters; sealift support for security forces; logistical support to remote detachments accessible only by small craft; and support of military civic action activities. In practice, however, it is concerned primarily with the prevention of illegal fishing and smuggling in territorial waters. It has the capability of patrolling selected portions of both the Caribbean and Pacific coastlines. Marines are stationed on both the Caribbean and Pacific coasts and can be used in support of army elements engaged in counterinsurgency operations; the marines can be sealifted to selected portions of the coasts and inland waterways to combat small groups of insurgents. The navy's landing craft can trooplift up to 60 men for operations in the Lago de Izabal area. Although the naval service is hampered by lack of experienced personnel, an inadequate training program, and limited training facilities, the force is becoming increasingly effective. One of its strongest assets is the enthusiasm and interest of its personnel. Ships are in good condition. A U.S. floating workshop, leased to Guatemala in 1962, facilitates maintenance operations. Guatemala has no reserve of naval personnel or ships. (S)

1. Organization (S)

The Guatemalan Navy, as a branch of the army, is formally subordinate to the Chief of the Army General Staff, but in practice it is under the operational control of the Minister of National Defense.

The naval headquarters is located at Santo Tomas de Castilla. The Chief of the Navy exercises direct control over all ships and four Caribbean coastal watch towers. He is assisted by a deputy chief and a staff composed of the following sections: N-1, Personnel; N-2, Intelligence; N-3, Operations; N-4, Logistics; and N-5, Maintenance. The N-1 and N-2 sections are combined under one staff officer, as are the N-2 and N-3 sections. Other staff officers include a Chief of Communications and a Chief of Public Relations.

The operations-communications center of the naval headquarters is responsible for navy communications. An AM voice net is operated between the headquarters and various naval craft. The communications capability is not adequate to support coastal surveillance operations, since the coastal watch stations are not in the same command net as the naval craft.

2. Strength, composition, and disposition³ (C)

The naval ship inventory consists of four patrol boats (PB), one 85-foot and three 65-foot; six patrol craft (PBR), two 63-foot, two 40-foot, and two 28-foot; and one amphibious warfare craft (LCM). The 85-foot patrol boat (Figure 6) is armed with three .50-caliber machineguns. The 65-foot patrol boats are also armed with three stern-mounted .50-caliber machineguns; a bow-mounted 20-mm cannon is to be installed on each sometime in 1972. Each of the 63-foot patrol craft (Figure 7) carries two .50-caliber machineguns; the 40-foot patrol craft each carry a single .50-caliber machinegun; and the two 28-foot patrol craft are armed with two .30-caliber machineguns apiece. The four patrol boats and the two 63-foot patrol craft are radar equipped and can provide a limited surveillance capability of portions of the coast during nighttime and other periods of low visibility.

All naval craft except the three 65-foot patrol boats are homeported at Santo Tomas de Castilla. The three 65-foot patrol boats, acquired in late 1971 and early 1972, are stationed on the Pacific coast at Sipacate. This new naval base, rushed to completion in March 1972, gives the navy a two-ocean status for the first time and will allow it to conduct coastal surveillance and antismuggling operations on the Pacific coast. The navy is expected to acquire an additional 85-foot Sewart patrol boat in early 1973 and reportedly is seeking additional 65-foot patrol craft.

In addition to its patrol boats, the navy utilizes coastal watch towers, manned by marines, to aid in its tasks of curtailing smuggling and of assisting in the maintenance of internal security. There are four towers on the Caribbean coast, and the navy reportedly has selected eight watch-tower sites on the Pacific coast.

3. Training (C)

Naval officer cadets attend six semesters of basic schooling at the Polytechnic Institute in Guatemala City before they receive specialized training for their career as navy officers. The navy maintains a school at the naval base at Santo Tomas de Castilla for technical training of enlisted personnel in communications, seamanship, and gunnery. Proficiency within the engineering rates has reached an acceptable standard. Emphasis is being placed on communications and electronics in order to improve the effectiveness of the surveillance system. The Navy Section of the U.S. Military Group in Guatemala has

³For current ship strength and disposition see *Automated Naval Order of Battle (Ships)* published by the Defense Intelligence Agency.

played an important part in the training of officers and enlisted men in this small navy, and a large majority of naval personnel have received U.S. training in the Canal Zone or in the United States. A few officers have been trained in the service schools of other Latin American countries.

The marines receive training in standard infantry subjects, plus basic seamanship and other naval subjects. The marine platoons serve as a basic training unit for the navy. All persons who desire to join the navy must volunteer initially for marine duty and enlist for a 2½-year period. Those who show outstanding capabilities are given an opportunity to join the navy. Army officers detached for duty in the navy likewise receive initial training in the marine platoons, where they wear army uniforms and retain

their army rank. Upon completion of this training, they may become attached to the navy, wear the navy uniform, and assume naval rank.

4. Logistics (C)

The navy has no separate logistical system and is totally dependent upon foreign sources of supply for ships, spare parts, POL, and almost all manufactured goods. Acquisition of arms, munitions, clothing, and all types of equipment for the navy is the responsibility of the G-4 Section of the Army General Staff. This logistical system is barely adequate for normal peacetime operations, and for any sustained operation it would require the support of external sources. Generally, only food and clothing are provided by

FIGURE 6. The Navy's largest ship, an 85-foot patrol boat (PB) (U/OU)

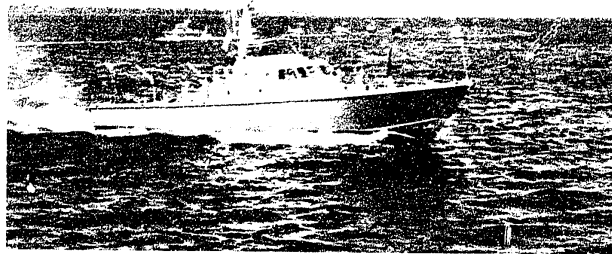
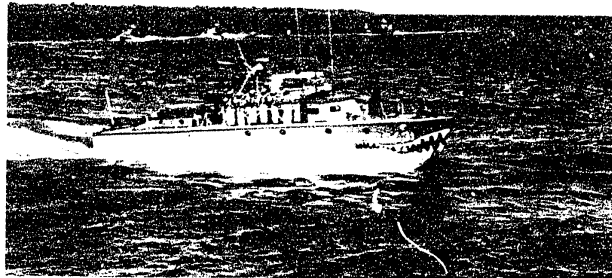


FIGURE 7. One of the Navy's two 63-foot patrol craft (PBR) (U/OU)



local sources. Naval repairs are carried out at the repair facilities in Livingston and the naval base at Santo Tomas de Castilla.

5. Marines (S)

The marines, an integral element of the navy, provide for the security of the naval bases and man the coastal watch towers. In addition, marine personnel provide a ready reaction force to be transported by naval units to coastal areas or to inland waterways of the Lago de Izabal area (Figure 8). However, the element does not have sufficient personnel to patrol adequately the long coastlines and inland waterways.

The marine element is organized into one company of five rifle platoons. Personnel consist of an estimated 20 officers and 255 enlisted men. One of the platoons is stationed at the new naval base at Sipacate, the remaining marines are at the naval headquarters or on duty along the Caribbean coastline, and all platoons are equipped with a variety of weapons, particularly M-1 rifles. Communications equipment includes two PRC-10 transceivers. There is no motor transport assigned to the platoons.

E. Air force

The 300-man Guatemalan Air Force is the most effective of the Central American air forces. A subordinate element of the Guatemalan Army, it essentially is assigned the mission of assisting the ground forces in the defense of the country and in the maintenance of internal security. The air force also is tasked with the transport of troops, government officials, and supplies to military posts which are difficult to reach by surface transportation. The force's tactical air capability was significantly improved by the acquisition of A-37B jet aircraft from the United States in June 1971, but the small size of the force and the obsolescence of remaining aircraft will continue to limit the overall combat capability. It has no strategic air capability and no early-warning and ground controlled intercept air defense system. The air force is capable of performing some maritime reconnaissance in support of naval forces, and it has had some experience in various phases of air-to-ground operations in support of counterinsurgency operations. In addition, the air force on several occasions has successfully demonstrated the capability of providing armed helicopters for airlifting troops and supplies into remote areas to combat small insurgent groups.



FIGURE 8. Marines landing from the Navy's single amphibious warfare craft (LCM) in an assault exercise (U/OU)

Logistics is a major weakness of the air force, as it is entirely dependent on the United States for aircraft, related equipment, and aviation fuel. Aircraft maintenance is generally only fair because of shortages of maintenance funds and of spare parts and the lack of qualified maintenance technicians. (S)

A 400-man Guatemalan Army security force is stationed at La Aurora International Airport, in the southern outskirts of the capital. The force is responsible for the internal security of the installation and has the additional mission of blocking any air operation not authorized by the Minister of National Defense. The air force is not politically active, but it retains its traditional anti-Communist orientation. (S)

1. Organization (C)

The Chief of the Air Force is formally subordinate to the Chief of the Army General Staff. In practice, however, the Chief of the Air Force is responsible directly to the Minister of National Defense, who maintains complete operational control over the air force. The force has little or no part in overall military operational planning and remains subordinate to the Guatemalan Army General Staff in these matters. The Chief of the Air Force is assisted by a second and a third in command, an Inspector General, and a four-section Air Staff: A-1, Personnel; A-2, Intelligence (integrated into the Intelligence Section of the Army General Staff); A-3, Operations; and A-4, Supply. There are also a Civic Actions Officer and a Chief of Maintenance. Aircraft are assigned to either the fighter squadron or the transport squadron, and all are based at La Aurora International Airport.

2. Strength, composition, and disposition⁴ (C)

The air force personnel strength is 300; all are volunteers, and of the 68 officers, 58 are pilots. The force relies heavily upon the services of specialists—NCO-equivalent personnel who are under complete military discipline and have technical skills not found in the average enlisted conscript. The use of specialists helps keep personnel turnover rates low, but the air force has a pressing need for more and better trained personnel to handle its growing technical and maintenance needs.

The Guatemalan Air Force has no formal organized reserve program. In an emergency, personnel who

⁴For current detailed information see the *Free World Air Order of Battle* and the *Military Intelligence Summary*, both published by the Defense Intelligence Agency. For additional information on airfields, see the Transportation and Telecommunications chapter of this General Survey.

have served their active duty tours and have returned to civilian life are expected to volunteer their services, and the air force could also call upon the 29 pilots and 11 aircraft (only six operational at any one time) of the Guatemalan Aviation Enterprise (AVIATECA), the government-owned civilian airline.

The air force has a total of 45 aircraft in its inventory. All are armed or capable of being armed on short notice. However, only 34 are operationally assigned to the two squadrons as indicated in the following.

TYPE	NUMBER		SQUADRON
	On hand	Operationally assigned	
A-37B	7	6	Fighter
T-33 (Figure 9)	6	6	Do
B-26	4	0	Do
C-47	10	7	Transport
UH-1H (Figure 10)	5	5	Do
UH-19B	4	4	Do
Utility*	9	6	Do
Total	45	34	

*Cessnas, Pipers, etc.

Although the air force is suffering from a shortage of maintenance personnel, the aircraft are maintained in good condition, with an average deadline rate of only about 20% of those assigned to units. Some of the aircraft not assigned to units are old and have not flown for year because of the difficulty of maintenance and of obtaining replacement parts. The air force is seeking replacements for its deadlined aircraft and is expected to acquire a C-47 and a DC-6B in early 1973; in addition, it is seeking additional A-37B aircraft from the U.S.

3. Training (C)

All air force officers attend the Polytechnic Institute, in the capital, prior to receiving specialized career training. The flight training program of the air force, augmented by U.S. MAP support, is adequate to meet current requirements and stresses support of counterinsurgency operations, aerial resupply, and search and rescue operations. Air indoctrination, proficiency, and upgrading flights are conducted from La Aurora International Airfield. Student pilots are trained in the United States, where they receive their wings; they return to Guatemala in the status of cadet and subsequently are commissioned as pilots. The first class of six pilot trainees was graduated in September 1971 from the air force helicopter training program; a new class of about four pilot trainees probably will be formed in late 1972.

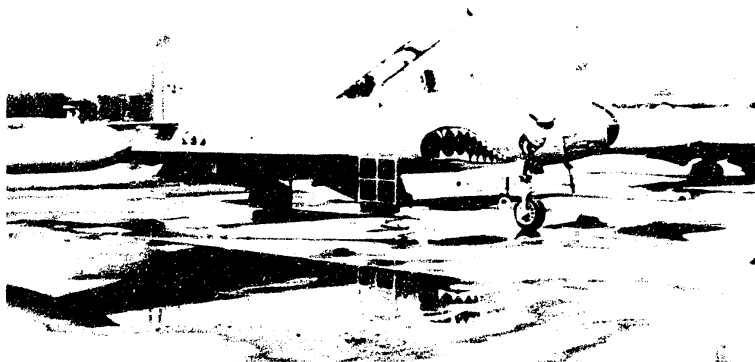


FIGURE 9. Air Force T-33 aircraft lined up at La Aurora Airbase (C)

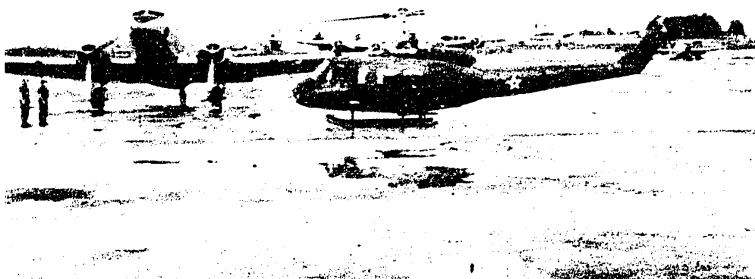


FIGURE 10. Air Force UH-1H helicopter and C-47 at La Aurora Airbase (C)

Most of the training for ground officers, airmen, and key specialists is provided at the Inter-American Air Forces Academy, at Albrook Air Force Base, Canal Zone. Selected officers attend the Squadron Officer School and the Air Command and Staff School at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. There is a U.S. Air Force Section in the U.S. Military Group assigned to the Guatemalan Air Force in an advisory capacity.

Newly inducted personnel attend an air force-operated mechanics school. In addition to covering all basic aircraft engine and fuselage data, including communications and electronics, the 2-year course conducted at this school provides academic instruction. Establishment of the mechanics school

was a major step toward air force self-sufficiency in the training of airmen.

4. Logistics (C)

The maintenance and supply systems, which are organized along the lines of the U.S. Air Force, are adequate to sustain normal operations but could not sustain extended operations in support of a national disaster-relief program or counterinsurgency operations in more than one threatened area. The air force is entirely dependent on foreign sources, primarily U.S., for aircraft, spare parts, armament, ammunition, and aviation fuel. A high sortie rate would be limited to no more than 3 days because of inadequate reserves.

SECRET

Places and features referred to in this chapter (U/OU)

	COORDINATES	
	° 'N.	° 'W.
Coatepeque.....	14 42	91 52
Cobán.....	15 29	90 19
Guatemala City (or Guatemala).....	14 38	90 31
Jutiapa.....	14 17	89 54
Lago de Izabal (<i>lake</i>).....	15 30	89 10
Livingston.....	15 50	88 45
Los Cipresales.....	14 47	90 47
Petén.....	14 37	90 17
Poptún.....	16 21	89 26
Quezaltenango.....	14 50	91 31
Puerto Barrios.....	15 43	88 36
Retalhuleu.....	14 32	91 41
San José.....	13 55	90 49
San Marcos.....	14 58	91 48
Santa Cruz del Quiché.....	15 02	91 08
Santo Tomás de Castilla.....	15 42	88 37
Sipacate.....	13 56	91 09
Zacapa.....	14 58	89 32

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