

SOF Truths

Truth I: Humans are more important than hardware.

People — not equipment — make the critical difference. The right people, highly trained and working as a team, will accomplish the mission with the equipment available. On the other hand, the best equipment in the world cannot compensate for a lack of the right people.

Truth II: Quality is better than quantity.

A small number of people, carefully selected, well trained, and well led, are preferable to larger numbers of troops, some of whom may not be up to the task.

Truth III: Special Operations Forces cannot be mass produced.

It takes years to train operational units to the level of proficiency needed to accomplish difficult and specialized SOF missions. Intense training — both in SOF schools and units — is required to integrate competent individuals into fully capable units. This process cannot be hastened without degrading ultimate capability.

Truth IV: Competent Special Operations Forces cannot be created after emergencies occur.

Creation of competent, fully mission capable units takes time. Employment of fully capable special operations capability on short notice requires highly trained and constantly available SOF units in peacetime.

Truth V: Most special operations require non-SOF support.

The operational effectiveness of our deployed forces cannot be, and never has been, achieved without being enabled by our joint service partners. The support Air Force, Army, Marine and Navy engineers, technicians, intelligence analysts, and the numerous other professions that contribute to SOF, have substantially increased our capabilities and effectiveness throughout the world.

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