

BACKGROUND

DIRECTIONAL EMPHASIS OF SECTOR

In order to maintain Singapore's stability and growth, the government has identified a need for a "total defense" policy. This policy compasses 5 separate components, each under the responsibility of a Ministry:

- Psychological Defense - Ministry of Communications and Information
- Social Defense - Ministry of Community Development
- Economic Defense - Ministry of Trade and Industry
- Civil Defense - Ministry of Home Affairs
- Military Defense - Ministry of Defense (MINDEF)

Psychological defense involves the strengthening of the people's commitment to the country, while social defense seeks to increase the people's ability to live harmoniously as a community. Economic defense ensures that basic daily necessities are available even during an emergency, while civil defense aims to equip the population with the ability to respond in a trained and organized manner in times of emergencies. Finally, military defense involves the maintenance of efficient warfare capabilities by the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF).

AN OVERVIEW OF THE SINGAPORE ARMED FORCES

The SAF began building its forces in 1965 (with independence). It started with the formation of the First Battalion and the Singapore Infantry Regiment. Today, SAF is composed of 50,000 in personnel and 660,000 in available manpower.

The SAF is composed of 3 major services - the army, the airforce, and the navy.

The army - Singapore's largest service with a strength of 45,000 soldiers organized into one divisional headquarters staff, one armored brigade, three infantry brigades, one artillery brigade, six artillery battalions, one commando battalion (one of the best in the region), six engineer battalions and three signal battalions. Army reserves total an additional 150,000 troops organized into 18 reserve battalions, nine artillery battalions, six engineering battalions, two signal battalions and one commando battalion.

It is also equipped with Infantry weapons such as SAR-80 assault rifles, AR-15 (M-16) rifles, Ultimax 100 light machine guns, 81mm mortars, Armburst anti-tank weapon, and others. Most of this equipment and complementary ammunition is manufactured by subsidiaries of MINDEF. Equipment used by the armoured regiment includes the French built AMX-13 light tank and the American-made M113 Armoured Personnel carrier. Equipment used by the Singapore artillery battalions includes 120mm and 160mm mortars as well as the locally built 15mm FH 88.

The airforce (of 6,000 personnel) is equipped with more than 100 aircraft including F5E/F Tiger II which serves as an interceptor. Other aircraft include A4S Skyhawks, Hawker F-74S fighters, F16s, C-130 Hercules and Skyvans, and helicopters like Bell UH-1B's, UH-1Hs and AS 332M Super Pumas. For ground-based air defense surface-to-air missile systems like the Bloodhound MarkII, Improved-Hawks, Rapier, RBS-70 and E2C Hawkeyes are utilized.

The navy is composed of 4,500 personnel deployed on board ships and at shore establishments. it has a fleet of 32 ships organized into 6 squadrons. These include 6 missile gun boats, 6 patrol craft, 12 coastal patrol craft, 5 landing tanks, 2 minesweepers, and 1 training ship.