

these corporate entities are energized by the profit motive and may see such a contract as a lucrative source of income, thus increasing the price for the job. As well, truly international companies are difficult to find and the awarding of a contract to a firm from one country (or group of countries) may not sit well with all participants.

There may be scope to approach one of the respected academically-based international institutes who already have an interest and some expertise in the subject of arms control to manage a light weapons register. Often these non-government institutes have existing computer capacity of their own or of a parent university, along with the expertise to run it. An interest certainly exists, as their extensive research data bases testify.⁴¹ Normally, high-calibre academic faculty are already involved in the projects and a fund of background knowledge exists on the subject of arms transfer registers as a transparency measure. Therefore, costs may be lower and the threshold knowledge of the staff may be higher by using facilities in some of the institutes. Depending upon the institute chosen, it may be possible to cut some costs and get a high quality product at the same time. Even though the institute may be located in a particular country, a degree of independence and political insulation may be provided by their status as academic and non-governmental organizations.

If this route were to be followed, there are some areas which would require careful consideration. The institute or university chosen must have a demonstrated capability and expertise, and not be chosen just to satisfy some arbitrary criterion such as "proper" geographic distribution or "acceptable" political affiliation. Safeguards must be built into the agreement or contract which would clearly spell out the parameters of work to be done and to prevent the information being used for other purposes which participating states may feel to be contrary to their aims. As in any contract, the role of employer/contractor must be clearly delineated and understood.

THE OPERATION OF A REGISTER

National Data Collection

How the collection of data within a participating state for submission to the register is to be undertaken is a matter for each state to determine. The route chosen may be as elaborate as the creation of a special domestic organization, which acts in concert with military and criminal security agencies, or as simple as tasking a specific official to do it. Some countries will be better able to undertake the data collection than others because of existing organizational and legal norms within their borders. While the exact methods of national data collection will vary from country to country, some general issues will remain constant.

There will likely be a need for co-ordination of general statistical information collection among a number of national agencies: military, business, civilian security and diplomatic. The