



# Ministry of Defense Advisor (MoDA) Program

## *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)*

### **How do I apply?**

Applications can be submitted via email directly to [dsca.ncr.bpc.list.moda@mail.mil](mailto:dsca.ncr.bpc.list.moda@mail.mil) and should include the following:

- Cover letter identifying desired posting and why you are a fit.
- Narrative chronological resume.
- Current SF-50 with social security number and birthdate redacted.
- Three reference letters, including the current supervisor and/or supervisors of prior deployments.
- Command/Component approval to deploy (this is imperative to go through the selection process).

### **What are the minimum criteria for prospective MoDA candidates?**

- **Candidates should meet the following requirements: Current DOD Civilian in GS 13/14/15 grade or equivalent.**
- Must occupy permanent position status with home command/agency/department.
  - A permanent DOD civilian position is defined by CFR 531.403 as a position filled by an employee whose appointment is not designated as temporary and does not have a definite time limitation of 1 year or less. Permanent positions include a position to which an employee is promoted on a temporary or term basis for at least 1 year and does not refer to positions filled by employees whose appointment is limited to 1 year or less.
  - Candidates in a Title 22 (FMS-funded) or Temp/Term billet. Your home agency should confirm they can support this opportunity and accept Title 10 International Security Cooperation Program (ISCP) O&M funding for your position reimbursement.
  - OCONUS candidates cannot be on or entering the Priority Placement Program (PPP) while on assignment.
- Demonstrated subject matter expertise in relevant areas.
- Command approval to accomplish a Temporary Change of Station (TCS) for 12–30 months after training.

### **What is considered relevant subject matter expertise?**

Key areas of subject matter expertise include Program Management, Cyber, Maritime Domain Awareness, Logistics, Personnel Readiness, Strategy, Policy, Human Resources, and Financial Management, among others. If your expertise is not listed, you are still encouraged to apply.



### **Do I have to apply to specific MoDA openings?**

Only one application is required. If applying for multiple positions, include separate cover letters for each position of interest/ MoDA stakeholders will evaluate your candidacy for each role.

### **What does the MoDA selection process look like?**

Recruiters will review application material and conduct introduction calls to evaluate the candidate against the active requirements to provide guidance as to which opportunities would be the best fit. You may be asked to participate in multiple calls with our recruiters who will provide guidance to amplify various elements in your resume that are directly related to said opportunity. Upon completion of this exercise, and once the final version of the updated resume has been received, an interview with the MoDA Program Manager may be scheduled. Candidates whose backgrounds fit current requirements will be interviewed by the MoDA program manager (PM). If an appointment is warranted, the MoDA Program Management Office (PMO) will then conduct panel interviews for the most qualified candidates. Panels will consist of some combination of the following stakeholders: MoDA PM, the corresponding Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC/OSC), Chief and Combatant Commands (COCOMs), OSD Global Partnerships, and Institute for Security Governance (ISG) Regional Program Lead (RPL).

### **How do I complete Command Approval to participate in the MoDA Program?**

Obtain a Letter of Release from your parent organization/command. This must be an SES or O-6 level official and must specify the approved length of assignment once in-country (12–30 months). The recruiting team will provide you with a sample letter.

\*\*Army, Navy, Air Force employees require component approval. Refer to the specific position description for those points of contact.

### **How competitive is the MoDA selection process?**

It varies, but each MoDA position usually has 2–3 highly qualified candidates for final consideration.

### **Are there different types of assignments?**

Most assignments involve detailing individuals to the Defense Security Cooperation University/Defense Security Cooperation Service (DSCU/DSCS) for the duration of training and in-country assignments under a TCS status; however, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) fills a limited number of temporary duty (TDY) deployments and very few DSCA term hire positions.

### **How long are the detail assignments?**

TCS assignments are generally 12–30 months in-country based on position requirements.

### **Is housing furnished during in-country assignments?**

Yes. Furnished housing for TCS missions is provided through the embassy.

### **Do I have to pay rent or utilities while in-country?**

There is no charge for rent or utilities while in country; however, advisors are responsible for cable, internet, and landline services.



### **Are in-country MoDA assignments accompanied?**

For most TCS posts, the MoDA can be accompanied by their family members. This can vary by country. \*\*While pets are also authorized, MoDA follows the JTR WRT reimbursement for costs associated with pets.

### **Do spouses typically work while accompanying the MoDA in-country?**

Many spouses have continued working in either remote or in-person capacities; however, this assignment does **not** qualify spouses for the DOS Essential Family Members program unless they are already DOS employees. Over the years, several spouses have found employment within the embassy community. MoDA PMO does not assist in this area.

### **Does funding exist if I need to go TDY?**

Yes, if you receive approval in advance and are travelling with your foreign counterpart.

### **Does DSCA pay my salary?**

No, your parent organization continues to pay your salary. Your parent organization is reimbursed your basic pay based on Block 12A/20A of your SF-50. This is outlined in the General Terms and Conditions (GT&C) FS-7600. We will work with your organization to complete a GT&C FS-7600A or FS-7600B.

### **How is my pay revised once I reach my in-country assignment?**

Please review the DOS Office of Allowance page:

[https://aoprals.state.gov/Web920/location.asp?menu\\_id=95](https://aoprals.state.gov/Web920/location.asp?menu_id=95)

Cost of living allowance (COLA) and post differential information can be found on the DOS Allowance by Location pages.

### **Will I continue to accrue home leave?**

Yes, please work with your parent organization to process.

### **Am I authorized Funded Environmental Morale Leave (FEML)?**

FEML authorization depends on your assignment location. Joint Travel Regulation (JTR) 040401, paragraph B, includes a link to the list of approved FEML locations.

### **Can I be promoted because of this TCS assignment or deployment?**

No.

### **How does my annual evaluation work during my OCONUS detail assignment?**

As you will continue to encumber the Full-Time Employee (FTE) billet at your parent organization, your existing rater will continue to serve in that capacity throughout your MoDA assignment. It is incumbent on all MoDAs to ensure their raters have enough information to adequately perform this duty. The ODC/OSC should have input on your performance review.

### **Do I need a Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC)?**

Yes, but the MoDA PMO typically does not manage GTCCs for participants. You should have your GTCC placed into a mission critical status while on your assignment.



### **In the case of evacuation, where do I return?**

If the U.S. Embassy in country declares an Ordered or Authorized Departure due to local conditions, the MoDA Program Office will coordinate your orders and travel documentation. DOD civilian employees and their Exceptional Family Members (EFMs) will be processed for allowances in accordance with the JTR, Chapter 6, paragraph 0604.

### **What does MoDA training consist of?**

MoDA training has typically been a 7 to 8-week program; the training program is currently under review, and some courses are likely to integrate with Security Cooperation Officers (SCOs). Details will be provided as they develop.

### **Strategic Advisor Course (SAC):**

SAC is a 3-week course located at DSCU HQ and is conducted by Defense SCO Institute (DSI). Students will train comprehensive skill development in advisory functions and partner capacity building, which include adult to adult education models, mentoring, and multiple methods of engagement.

### **Country & Mission Seminar (CMS):**

CMS is a 3 to 4-week course. The first few weeks are conducted virtually from your Home of Record (HOR), and the last week is in-person at the DSCU NCR. You will receive the schedule for the course 1 week prior to the start of the course.

**\*\*Additional training details will be addressed by the training team after selection.**

**Department of State FACT:** Students will also attend DOS Foreign Affairs Counter Threat (FACT), a 1-week course out of Blackstone, VA.