

The Professional Journal of the Foreign Area Officer Association

"The FAO Journal"

# **International Affairs**

- Politico-Military Affairs - Intelligence - Security Cooperation -

Volume XV, Edition Number 1 - April 2012



## **Inside This SPECIAL EDITION ... Service Paths for FAO Development**

Service Proponent inputs - Single/Dual-Tracking  
Consolidation of Attache' & Security Cooperation  
UPDATE - The FAO Hall of Fame Display  
Dual Tracking: Common Sense in a Complex World

Obituary - LtCol John Loftis, USAF, RAS  
Getting More from the Army's Program  
Single-Tracking and the Keys to Fulfillment  
LREC-Triad for Joint FAO Education/Training

News — Opinion Editorials — Letters to the Editor — Professional Reading List

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**PURPOSE:** To publish a journal for disseminating professional knowledge and furnishing information that promotes understanding between U.S. regional and international affairs specialists around the world and improve their effectiveness in advising decision-makers. It is intended to forge a closer bond between the active, reserve, and retired FAO communities.

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See the insert within the Journal for details.

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**"The FAO JOURNAL"**

# **International Affairs**

**- Politico-Military Affairs - Intelligence - Security Cooperation -**

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**Volume XV, Edition Number 1 — Published April 2012**

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## **DoD News ... A Letter of Introduction from DLNSEO.**

Greetings from the Defense Language and National Security Education Office. Since 2005, our office, which falls under the purview of the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, has overseen the DoD FAO program. Our principal task is to ensure that all four Service FAO policies and programs properly train and use FAOs to support DoD wide missions. Even with the drawdown, requirements for FAOs are increasing to meet the demand for globally aware, language proficient officers with a regional expertise. Given the fact that FAOs will be at the front lines performing several of the key missions under the new defense policy – building partnerships and security cooperation - we do not expect the demand for FAOs to diminish. We now have over 2,000 FAOs, and the annual reports we receive from the Services show that the number of FAOs will continue to grow. We think this is a clear indicator that the value that FAOs bring to DoD is finally being recognized.

In this journal edition, you will find both the pros and cons on single versus dual tracking for FAOs. Both tracks have their merits and their drawbacks. From the DoD perspective, we believe each Service, taking into account the DoD's missions, is doing what is in the best interest of their Service. Currently, Army and Navy have gone the single track route and the Air Force and Marines Corps are following the dual track route. We also believe the end product, notwithstanding the track is selected, should create a system that produces well-rounded FAOs that possess the unique combination of strategic focus, language and regional expertise combined with professional military skills that allow FAOs to serve as DoD, Joint and Service representatives in foreign settings and as the premiere DoD regional experts in DoD or inter-agency assignments. A healthy debate on the issue of track systems is useful to inform one another on the pluses and pitfalls of a particular system; the history of how and why a Service came to its current tracking system can help inform others as they work to improve not only the quality of its FAOs but also the viability of their career paths.

Many thanks to those of you that completed the recent FAO Survey. This survey is part of a study being conducted by the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA), a Federally Funded Research and Development Center on our behalf on "Strengthening and Valuing the FAO Community. The study will look at existing FAO programs across the Services, identifying ways to strengthen the FAO career field and seeing how to maximize the unique capabilities FAOs bring to the table. IDA researchers are also conducting interviews at different locations and again, thank you for supporting the endeavor.

As many of you know, initial FAO training has not been consistent across DoD and as a result, many new FAOs get to their first FAO assignment without a good understanding of the FAO career and more importantly, not really prepared for that initial assignment. Working with the Service FAO Proponents, we will conduct the first Pilot Joint FAO Course, Phase 1 at DLIFLC in Monterey, California. The Army has agreed to be the executive agent for what we hope will turn into a two week training event for all new FAOs. Our first course will have about 100 new FAOs in attendance and our goal is to make this course part of the training required for all new FAOs. With the support of the Services we can give new FAOs a great introduction to their new career fields and pave the way for them to succeed in whatever FAO assignment they receive.

### **About the Authors ...**

Richard Anderson is the Director for DoD Language and Culture Policy in the Defense Language and National Security Education Office in OSD (P&R). He is a retired dual-tracked Army 48E and his assignments included ODC Chief, Estonia and SDO/DATT, Ukraine.

COL Humberto Rodriguez is the Joint FAO Program Manager in the Defense Language and National Security Education Office. He is a 48B whose assignments include Army Attaché in Venezuela, Defense Attaché in Guatemala, and SDO/DATT in Nicaragua.

## The FAO Journal: Editor's Reflection and Regretful Resignation Seeking Replacement Managing Editor

To the FAO community:

For the past three years, I have been allowed to serve as the Managing Editor of the FAO Association's professional journal (FAOJ), International Affairs. We have made great progress in professionalizing and vastly improving the quality of this FAO flagship product. However, I was recently offered an opportunity for professional education which forces me to resign. Serving as editor has been amazing, but it is time to pass that role to someone new. Therefore, your Board of Governors (BoG) is now seeking candidates who could potentially fill the role of FAOJ Managing Editor, and serve on the FAOA BoG.

I stood for the FAOA Board of Governors elections three years ago with the desire of becoming the Editor of the FAO Journal. I saw only potential, but the newly elected BoG faced significant challenges. For journal improvements, we took a phased approach with targeted effort toward increased membership, a business plan, distribution, content quality, content interest, new FAOA graphic, new FAOJ theme art, improved paper, and then ... color. There is still much that can be done. With an eye toward our core mission: to educate, advocate and influence – I hope you are satisfied with the effort improve the content, graphics, color, and interest of your journal.

I resign now only because I have been offered (and have accepted) formal PME which will require my full attention for one year. As such, I will be away from the beltway and unable to assist the BoG in a manner that the association and the other BoG members deserve. Therefore I intend to resign from the BoG, and as Managing Editor of FAOJ as soon as a transition can be arranged.

I have learned much as editor. When I assumed the role, I had no experience, special training or mentorship. It was the school of hard lessons, and I will not allow that to happen to my replacement. Ideally, we could start transition immediately to ease the process. I will remain active and available for advice after my departure in June, 2012.

It is a great challenge, and a great opportunity. Questions and potential volunteers should contact me at [Editor@FAOA.org](mailto:Editor@FAOA.org) or the our Association President at [President@FAOA.org](mailto:President@FAOA.org).

Regards, Coyt

Mr. Coyt D. Hargus, USA (R)  
Managing Editor  
International Affairs Journal  
FAOA Board of Governors



## Announcement and Recognition: The FAO journal's Editorial Board

One of the professionalization improvements made to the FAO journal is the creation of an Editorial Board. The Editorial Board not only assists the Managing Editor in the screening, edition and selection process for content, but they serve the academically critical role of elevating your journal to the status of a "peer reviewed" professional publication.

Board coordination on journal submissions is conducted via email because board members are scattered around the world with varied global assignments. Board members represent varied International Affairs backgrounds, and service assignments represent all services — Active, civilian, reserve and retired.

Current Editorial Board members are:

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With my appreciation, Coyt

Mr. Coyt D. Hargus  
 Managing Editor, FAOJ  
 FAOA, Board of Governors

## Journal Submissions - Writing Guide -

**Your Journal needs your submissions ...  
 interesting items of all lengths.**

When submitting articles, book reviews or letters to the editor for potential publication, please email them as WORD documents, single spaced, single paragraphs in Arial 11.

Insert any graphics, maps and pictures within the text at the appropriate location. Within the same email attach separate copies of each image, and a short "About the author" bio including a personal photo. Photos, maps and graphics add interest to articles and are highly encouraged.

Footnotes/endnotes are generally not printed, so include critical references within the text body.

Key data adding understanding, interest and flavor to your article can be added as text boxes.

All submissions are subject to minor editing for format, brevity and grammar as required.

**Email submissions to  
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## Consolidation of Attache' and Security Cooperation Activities: Time for the Next Step

By: Kurt M. Marisa, Colonel, USAF

On 21 December 2007, then Deputy Secretary of Defense William Lynn III signed Department of Defense (DoD) Directive 5105.75, entitled "*DoD Operations at U.S. Embassies*," creating the Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché (SDO/DATT) construct for the integration of Defense Attaché Offices (DAO) and Security Cooperation Organizations (SCO) around the world under the leadership of one embassy "Country Team" officer. Prior to this time, under the perpetuated "mythology" of the incompatibility of Attaché and security assistance functions and funding, the DoD presence at most U.S. embassies comprised a dual system of separate, competing, and sometimes hostile DAOs and SCOs (called Security Assistance Offices/SAOs at the time).

The signing of DoD 5105.75, and the subsequent supporting instruction (DoDI 5105.81) and implementation plan in 2008, involved years of sometimes contentious negotiations and consensus-building between the key stakeholders: the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)) and the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) in one camp, the Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence (USD(I)) and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) in another, as well as the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and Geographic Combatant Commands (GCC), each viewing the proposed paradigm changes through their own lenses of parochial interests.

Since the appointment of Maj Gen Floyd Williams, USAF, to Egypt as the first SDO/DATT in February 2009, to date the construct has been implemented at 135 embassy Country Teams around the globe and is expected soon in 12 others. DoDD 5105.75 has now been in place for almost four years. With the revision of this "SDO/DATT" directive pending during FY12, the time is appropriate for an evaluation of the initial lessons learned, successes and failures, limitations, and future potential of the SDO/DATT construct and integrated, synergistic DoD operations at U.S. embassies.

Has SDO/DATT been successful? Has success been region/country specific? What factors and conditions make consolidated DAO and SCO functions more successful? What are the perceptions of the embassy Chiefs of Mission (COM) and host nation military counterparts? What are the next steps that

should be taken given the current and future DoD financial constraints, personnel downsizing, and the effects of the draw-downs in Iraq and Afghanistan? This paper will provide a synopsis of how the SDO/DATT construct came into being, explore the above questions, and propose a future way ahead for increased consolidation and efficiencies of DoD organizations and operations at U.S. embassies.

### SDO/DATT Background

In late 2003 my Air War College paper, also published in this journal, argued for the merger of all DoD activities and organizations at U.S. embassies under the DATT. The paper was distributed to USD (P), USD(I), DSCA, DIA, and the GCCs. Based largely upon precepts of that paper, then Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) Donald Rumsfeld directed a "think tank" report on the future of DoD organization, activities, consolidation, and leadership at U.S. embassies around the world in the emerging security - and resource-constrained environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This report led to a three-year debate between the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), JCS, and the GCCs resulting in the 2007 SDO/DATT issuance.

I had contended that the Cold War system of "separate and distinct" DAOs and SAOs at most embassies would be difficult to sustain and was often actually counter-productive to DoD interests. I argued that they were, and should be, mutually-supportive and synergistic functions of a consolidated DoD team, as was already demonstrated at 55 countries where DAOs were responsible for DSCA/GCC security assistance programs. The system of multiple DoD entities at U.S. embassies--without a clear, single military officer responsible for all in-country DoD programs and policy--was a decades-old, dysfunctional compromise. This arrangement had placed the burden of responsibility for smooth and integrated DoD policy and representation upon the personalities of two or more often-competing senior military officers, rather than on a rational

*The views expressed throughout the journal do not necessarily reflect official policy nor do they imply a position for the DoD or any other US Government agency.*

organizational model, thus fostering confusion and sub-optimal relations with many COMs and host nations worldwide. I also opined regarding the inadequate authorities of the outdated U.S. Defense Representative (USDR) designation; as well as the need for a shared DATT chain of command between DIA and the GCCs, attaché diplomatic status for security assistance officers, and more common training for attaché, security assistance, and Foreign Area Officers (FAOs).

I had concluded that an integration of DoD functions, including DAOs and SAOs, under a single military officer at each embassy Country Team would 1) improve unity of command and effort, 2) reduce DoD manpower, expense, and logistics requirements, 3) create smaller in-country military “footprints” with reduced force protection vulnerabilities, and 4) foster operational synergies between traditional DAO representational missions and SAO security cooperation.

While not going so far as to direct full consolidation of DAO and SAO offices, the intent of DoDD 5105.75 in late 2007 was to create DoD unity of command and effort by 1) establishing the position of SDO as the DATT and SCO Chief, 2) requiring both attaché and security cooperation training for SDO/DATTs, and 3) creating shared DIA/GCC rating chains for SDO/DATTs. However, the directive and subsequent instruction compromised on fully assigning SDO/DATT responsibility for all DoD activities, as Marine Security detachments were excluded and other DoD elements--such as counter-intelligence (CI) Force Protection Detachments (FPDs), and Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA)--only fell under SDO/DATT “coordinating authority.”

The initial implementation plan called for establishing SDO/DATTs at 143 embassies, with another three possible locations. The initial focus was on appointing the maximum number of SDO/DATTs as quickly as possible, so a large number of officers were “grandfathered” in place without the expectation or benefit of the new dual-training requirement. Most of the SDO/DATT billet designations went to incumbent DIA DATT billets, but a smaller number went to GCC-funded SAO/SCO Chief billets, mainly at locations with general/flag officers, or other special cases.

Full implementation of the consolidated SDO/DATT construct was not without difficulty. Although it had been fully vetted with all GCCs in 2006 during coordination of the directive, by 2009 some of the GCCs were no longer accepting of the model. A GCC commander had even petitioned USD(P), and later SECDEF Robert Gates, to exempt major portions of his command. In March 2010, the SECDEF did authorize a delay in implementing SDO/DATT in four countries in that GCC’s area of responsibility (AOR), but directed the commander to expeditiously proceed with implementation in the remaining countries in the region. Additionally, the approval of individual SDO/DATTs has led to an unwieldy 6-month long coordination process between USD(P), USD(I), DIA, DSCA, JCS, and the affected GCCs. By the end of 2009, SDO/DATTs were established in 79 countries, and by the end of 2010 the number had grown to 131.

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### Recommendations and Observations from the Field

During my recent participation in the Naval Post-graduate School's Joint FAO Skills Sustainment Pilot Program (JFSSP) and other professional interactions, I had the opportunity to interview current and former SDO/DATTs and other subordinate attaché and SCO personnel (primarily in the USEUCOM AOR), as well as USEUCOM/J5 and the NATO Military Committee staff, on their perceptions regarding the successes, limitations, lessons learned, and way ahead for SDO/DATT and DAO/SCO consolidation. Below some of the common themes and relevant anecdotes are identified:

Most COMs are pleased with the SDO/DATT construct and appreciate having a single POC to address DoD issues.

Most host nation militaries understand and accept the SDO/DATT construct, since it is more in line with the embassy configurations used by most other countries. However, a few host nations continue to draw a Cold War distinction between security assistance personnel and attachés. At these few locations, the military remains resistant to recognize the SDO/DATT as "owning" Security Cooperation and attempts to limit DAO access.

Increasingly, there is a common belief that DAO and SCO missions are compatible and, when properly integrated, create resource efficiencies and

operational synergies, especially when accomplished by properly-selected and trained personnel. However, there is a remnant belief among SCO personnel that their host nation relationships may suffer.

There is common acceptance that SDO/DATTs should have subordinate heads for Attaché Operations and Security Cooperation activities. However, there is a dislike for the term "Deputy for," with the alternative preference being to use "Chief" (of Attaché Operations and Security Cooperation) to enhance performance appraisals and promotion chances.

Merging of administrative and support functions is feasible and can achieve resource and manpower efficiencies.

SCO officers at some locations have full, diplomatic attaché accreditation, rather than just embassy administrative status.

Other DoD operations at U.S. embassies beyond DAO/SAOs, including FPDs and DTRA, should also be more fully brought under the SDO/DATT, not just for coordination purposes.

The SDO/DATT construct **works best** at locations where:

- Successful implementation is no longer personality dependent and has matured at a particular Country Team/host nation with its second or third generation of implementation;

- The SDO/DATT is a trained FAO, preferably with previous experience as an attaché and/or SCO;

- The SDO/DATT is senior to, and from the same Service as, subordinate Deputies for Attaché Operations and Security Cooperation; and

- The SDO/DATT is a DIA-funded/sourced billet, since these are normally authorized a greater amount of representational benefits needed to fully accomplish the range of assigned activities.

- The SDO/DATT construct has experienced some initial **growing pains** at locations where:

- The SDO/DATT & Deputies are of the same rank;

- There are remnant personality conflicts and issues due to newness of implementation; and

- There is a lack of understanding or full acceptance from the host nation military.

## Voice Your Views

**The Journal strives to publish a variety of opinions, views, observations and analysis from tactical to strategic. We encourage you to express your voice by submitting articles, book reviews and Op-Ed pieces. Letters to the editor with both opposing and supporting the views of those expressed in published articles are encouraged. Submit your writings by either going to your association's website at [www.FAOA.org](http://www.FAOA.org) website, or via email.**

**[editor@faoa.org](mailto:editor@faoa.org)**



Current USEUCOM leadership is very supportive and characterizes the SDO/DATT construct as being more responsive to GCC mission areas, including operations, logistics, and policy/security cooperation interests.

USEUCOM has experienced some coordination issues with the shared DIA/GCC supervisory chain with DIA.

More SDO/DATTs should be trained FAOs from a mix of primary career fields.

Based upon these findings, the SDO/DATT function appears to be a success, despite some initial growing pains and the expected initial institutional resistance and personality conflicts. The construct has simplified the DoD unity of command at embassies and resulted in more transparent and integrated DoD operations. Host nations generally have been accepting or ambivalent, and the few locations continuing to express reservations will likely be resolved in time as the new construct becomes the norm. DoD attaché, representational, and security cooperation activities have been proven to be compatible and synergistic. More clarity and direction are needed on the roles, responsibilities, titles, and in-country status of subordinate attaché and security cooperation officers. Resource and personnel efficiencies, as well as additional operational synergies, can be gained by further consolidation of DoD activities and organizations under the SDO/DATT. Additionally, the current disposition of SDO/DATT billet type, rank, service, location, and experience requirements--as well as for his/her direct subordinates--was largely based upon what was in place in 2007 and is due for a systematic review and realignment. In general, experienced FAOs normally make the most effective SDO/DATTs. Lastly, the dual DIA/GCC rating chain for SDO/DATTs and separate reporting chains for DAO and SCO personnel appears to be working adequately to ensure stakeholder interests.

#### Way Ahead for DAO/SCO Consolidation

Based upon my original 2003 study proposals, the successful implementation of an initial SDO/DATT construct from 2004 to the present, and analysis of my recent field research, I offer the following

proposals for the next steps in DAO/SCO consolidation, as the DoD enters a period of national and defense uncertainty, budget constraints and downsizing, and force drawdown from overseas contingency operations. Many of these proposals should be considered in the next revision to DoDD governing issuances. Adoption of these proposals will help lead to the final stages of the rationalization of DoD operations, resources, and organizational construct at U.S. embassies along with concomitant cost and manpower savings, support infrastructure efficiencies, and synergies that will be realized.

#### Further Merging DAO/SCOs:

The time is right to take the next steps in creating a true unity of command and effort; wherever feasible, at locations where both exist, DAO and SCO functions should be merged into a common **organization** — the **Defense Attaché and Cooperation Office (DACO)** or alternatively the **Defense Attaché and Security Cooperation Office (DASCO)**. An office would remain only a DAO when no security cooperation function is present and an SCO when there is no Attaché office.

At a minimum, DAO/SCO administrative, logistics, and financial functions should be combined to create a more efficient use of constrained resources and to take the next steps toward operational integration.

Consider further extending the oversight and responsibility of SDO/DATTs over other currently excluded or limited DoD functions at some U.S.

#### Call for topics

The journal is actively seeking the family and/or spouse perspective on FAO training, JMAS, ICT, embassy life, social requirements, overseas schools, embassy furniture, POVs and/or experiences various FAO jobs around the world ... in the US and overseas

Such articles would be not only interesting to read, but might also assist in the preparation of the families that follow by sharing the facts of FAO life.

[Editor@FAOA.org](mailto:Editor@FAOA.org)

#### Quotable Quote ...

*"I am not come forth to find difficulties, but to remove them."*

*- Horatio Nelson, 1758-7805*

embassies. Another alternative for consideration would be to simply call an integrated organization that represents all DoD functions at U.S. embassies the DAO, which would be standard and familiar in diplomatic circles.

**Clarify DAO/SCO Personnel Titles, Roles, and Status:** The SDO/DATT title was a cumbersome compromise needed to reach a consensus on initial integration of DAO and SCO leadership; however, it remains non-standard and unfamiliar in diplomatic and inter-national circles.

As the SDO/DATT construct roll-out is completed worldwide, DATT and SDO/DATT will become almost synonymous, so consideration should be given to just using the title "DATT".

Consider giving command equivalent-credit to SDO/DATTs in order to increase the career enhancing value of this important duty for those joint service personnel selected.

Establish full diplomatic accreditation and attaché status for all security cooperation officers, but at a minimum for the Deputy/Chief of Security Cooperation, who should also be designated as the **Defense Cooperation Attaché** or **Security Cooperation Attaché**

Rename Deputies for Security Cooperation and Attaché Operations to "Chiefs," similar to Division Chiefs.

**Increased Common Training:** Attachés, security cooperation officers, and FAOs should be required to receive additional common training in order to improve collaboration, enhance mutual under-

standing and trust, and create increased operational synergies and a more efficient use of personnel.

At a minimum, as provided to all DAO personnel, Security Cooperation Office personnel should be provided with additional training in security, CI awareness and counter-elicitation, cross-cultural communications and sensitivity, embassy/Country Team orientation, and language skills.

All attachés should attend the basic Security Assistance training at DSCA's Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management (DISAM). Additionally, to the extent possible, all Security Cooperation officers should attend an attaché operations orientations course, similar to the 2-week Reserve Attaché Course taught by DIA's Joint Military Attaché School (JMAS).

**DAO/SCO Billet Review:** Key stakeholders should conduct a global review of SDO/DATT positions, as well as subordinate Deputy (Chief) positions, to determine the best apportionment by service, rank, location, and organizational funding/sourcing (DIA or GCC).

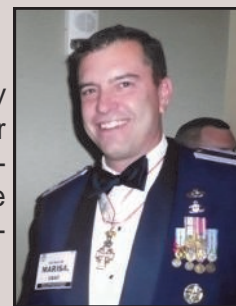
**Increased Billet Fills by FAOs:** To the extent possible, SDO/DATT billets should be filled by trained, joint service FAOs with prior attaché and/or security cooperation experience. As the FAO programs of all military services continue to grow and mature, more subordinate attaché and security cooperation officer positions should be filled with FAOs. This concept is reinforced by the 10 August 2011 SECDEF memo reinforcing the value of advanced regional expertise, cultural capabilities, and language skills for military officers.

## About the Author ...

**Colonel Kurt M. Marisa, USAF, European RAS:** Kurt currently serves as a Deputy Director in the Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence (USD(I)). Col Marisa is a career intelligence officer who has been an Air Force FAO and Regional Affairs Strategist (RAS-Europe) since 1998. He has served as Attaché to Saudi Arabia, Suriname, and the Kingdom of Denmark and Greenland. He has also had assignments in Germany and Korea and deployments to Saudi Arabia and South America.

Col Marisa has an MS in International Studies from the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague, Netherlands and an MS in Strategic Intelligence from the NDIC (formerly JMIC). He is a graduate of the Joint Forces Staff College, Air Command and Staff College, and Air War College, from which he wrote and published his course paper on the integration of Attaché and Security Assistance programs, contributing at the SECDEF level to the current DoD Senior Defense Officer (SDO)/DATT program.

Kurt currently serves as the President of the FAOA Board of Governors.



## The Army's Single-Track FAO Program: Pathway to Success

By: Jason B. Nicholson, US Army, FAO

As the US ramps down from participation in two wars, the US Army's Foreign Area Officer (FAO) branch will continue to grow, despite impending overall cuts to the Department of Defense in general and the US Army in particular. The healthy future of the Army's FAO program is directly attributable to recognition by senior uniformed and civilian leaders for the performance of these culturally and linguistically fluent Soldiers during war. Institutional demand by the service, joint, and interagency communities for more FAO billets continues to increase. These successes are directly attributable to the Army's decision in the late 1990s to modify the FAO career field from a "dual-track" to "single-track" career field. While senior leaders no-longer question the utility of specialist FAOs, the debate has shifted to one of how can FAOs, who largely serve in the joint force, contribute more to the US Army.

The most important aspect of this change was the increased viability for career progression. Under the "dual track" system officers were trained as FAOs but generally returned to their basic branch prior to their first utilization tour in their secondary specialty of FAO. The training pipeline required for FAO has always been a substantial investment in terms of time. While "dual track" FAOs were completing language, in-region training, and graduate school their "single track" peers in the basic branches completed second company-level commands, served in the institutional Army, and generally remained close to their traditional Army skills. This created generally lower rates of selection for promotion and resident staff college attendance by FAOs.

A direct result of these lower rates of selection were reduced chances of selection for key branch qualifying positions as a field grade officer, which in turn fed lower rates of promotion to Lieutenant Colonel. Broadly speaking, this created a climate where self-selecting to become a FAO was often viewed as a career ending choice. This most likely

explains why several well-known senior Army leaders, such as General Abizaid, were trained as FAOs, but never completed a FAO utilization tour. Officers moving back and forth between two distinct career tracks were challenged to meet all the gates required to be successful at both. While some individuals did excel under this system, in general the "dual track" path was a difficult one that resulted in many FAOs never wholly fulfilling optimal levels of career potential.

The situation of a "dual track" career path was not unique to FAO. At various times in the not-too-distant past both Aviation and Special Forces branches faced the same challenges. These branches, after switching to the single-track system, saw increased advancement opportunities and a higher level of professionalism in the officers assigned to their organizations. The FAO career field showed similar results. The change to a "single track" career contributed to a higher degree of expertise in critical FAO skills in the community. Without the need to compete in two



distinct fields for career progression FAOs were able to pursue repetitive assignments, which capitalized upon the skills which the Army had invested so much time and money into developing.

The result was, and is, a FAO corps with a higher degree of cultural and linguistic fluency, more experience working in their regions, and greater understanding of the US interagency. All of these benefits of the "single track" career path make FAOs better positioned to better fulfill the core function of providing political-military advice to military commanders. This degree of specialization was unachievable under the "dual track" system and resulted in a "jack of all trades, master of none" model.

Another key aspect of the "single track" system is that it makes the FAOs' unique, and expensive, skills

much easier to sustain and maintain. The need for skills sustainment is important to both FAOs and non-FAOs. It would be nearly impossible for anyone to remain at the cutting edge of their branch if they are spending two to three years away in other assignments. This is especially true in the technical branches, such as the Signal Corps, but also for combat arms where conditions on the battlefield render TTPs obsolete at an astonishing rate.

All of these changes to the FAO career field have resulted in a more vibrant and dynamic population of officers whose service keeps them relevant to the force. Although small in number, the Army has recognized the unique contributions and skills of its FAOs. This is borne out by the steady, but limited, numbers of promotions FAOs to general officer. Although, it must be pointed out, that most of these promotions have been to officers who served under the dual track system and met many of the traditional gates of success such as battalion and brigade command, which remain the Army's main pathway to senior leader. The Army is just now entering the period of time where officers in the FAO career field as "single track" officers are eligible for promotion to flag rank. Brigadier General Matthew Brand and Major General Charles Hooper represent the first generation of FAOs promoted as single track officers.



Most of this change has been against a backdrop of a decade of conflict in two theaters. During this time, FAOs have served in combat from the tactical to strategic levels of war, both advising senior leaders and commanding small units, such as PRTs, in combat. The impacts of this outstanding record of service by FAOs writ large remains to be seen. However, if the recent past is any indication, the Army will increasingly acknowledge, and reward, FAOs with higher levels of rank and responsibility. The next challenge for the FAO community will not

be to remain relevant, but rather to define the appropriate role for FAOs in the operational force during peacetime. This will be important, not only for placing an additional multiplier in the kit-bag of deploying unit commanders, but because many of the supported organizations' leaders will form their views about the FAO corps on their experiences with FAOs on their staff.



While the majority of Army FAO billets will likely remain at the strategic level there is plenty of room to grow positions at lower levels. During combat operations, particularly COIN and low intensity conflict, the value of a FAO on a brigade or division staff is easily apparent. During peacetime, however, it is harder to define the task and purpose of placing such an expensive asset in these organizations. We in the community have all seen the stereotypical staff FAO who becomes the "foreigner wrangler." However, the Division and Corps HQs, with the mission to perform as JTFs, could potentially add FAOs to their staffs. The operational level is probably the correct lowest level staff for assignment of FAOs during peacetime.

The Army's answer to this conundrum is still evolving but future force structures are becoming apparent. The creation of the 162d Infantry Brigade, with its mission of training Military Transition Teams for deployment, has provided the FAO corps with billets oriented to the tactical and operational levels of command. Prospective missions with the Regionally Aligned Forces as the Army re-sets and re-positions for a post-conflict future will also provide opportunities. Even FAO billets in theater army and combatant command headquarters need reevaluation, too often the FAOs are stove-piped into only the security cooperation or intelligence

directorates. The unique skills of FAOs could, and should, be spread throughout the staff so that operations incorporate cultural, political, and regional dynamics into planning.

LTC David Moulton, 48G, in his article *The Army's Foreign Area Officer Program: To Withier or to Improve?* recommends the Army, “increase region-specific deployment opportunities for FAOs with units conducting either exercises or operations.” While the Army has largely done this for forces deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan, it has not necessarily done so for other non-combat operations. Many of these same operations could greatly benefit from having a FAO on staff to liaise with host-nation militaries and the US interagency, and provide political-military advice to force commanders.

A natural place that bridges the gap from tactical to strategic which would place FAOs at lower echelons of command is the SOF community. While there are many shared skill sets of SF officers and FAOs, they are distinct career fields with separate tasks and purposes. The critical and sensitive nature of SOF activities at the tactical level that have strategic ramifications is a perfect example of how FAOs should be employed. The regional orientation of US Army SF groups lends greater credence to this idea, as FAOs are uniquely qualified to advise the commanders of such organizations.

The future of the FAO community and career field is brighter now than at any time in the past. During 10 years of continuous war the FAO corps has proven its worth in combat while continuing to excel at its more traditional duties. Joint, interagency, and institutional leaders at all levels have recognized the unique talents of Army FAOs through an increased demand on their staffs. The Secretary of Defense even directed the other services to develop FAO programs, while highlighting the effectiveness of the Army's FAO corps. The challenge for US Army FAOs now is to translate this vast body of operational experience into enduring opportunities for service. While it is too early to predict what long-term opportunities will change in terms of billets, positions, and employment, it can be assumed that the “dual track” system would not have supported the demands upon the FAO community since 9/11. The successes of the FAO career field are directly attributable to the Army's decision to switch to “single track” for this dynamic career field.

### About the Author:

Major Jason (Brad) Nicholson is the Chief, Office of Security Cooperation, US Embassy Uganda. His previous assignments include, U.S. Embassy Tanzania, the Joint Staff, and the Army Staff.



## FAOA Board members attend Atlantic Council event with DepSecDef Carter

By: Mr. Coyt Hargus, Managing Editor - International Affairs

On 15 February, Deputy Secretary of Defense Aston Carter spoke at an Atlantic Council event in Washington, DC. Carter's presentation was titled “Pivotal Partnerships: The Prospects for International Defense Cooperation in an Age of Austerity” and were well received by the audience, which included members of your FAOA Board of Governors.

Carter spoke about the Obama administration's defense strategy and repeatedly stressed the growing importance of international partnerships for America's continued success, particularly within the budgetary constraints the US and its security partners now find themselves. New threats and uncertain times force the US to leverage partnerships not only for US national security, but also for international security-stability. Carter addressed how the United States will face the challenges and opportunities of re-engaging current allies, while looking to employ new relationships in order to meet these growing security needs.

Carter's comments were followed by a short Q & A session. FAOA President COL Kurt Marisa asked Carter for his views on Building Partnerships, and the FAO program.

To hear all Carter's comments, see the link on the FAOA web site for an MP3 file. [www.FAOA.org](http://www.FAOA.org)

## UPDATE — The FAO Hall of Fame and Display in the Pentagon

By Humberto Rodriquez, Colonel, US Army, WSO-DLNSEO

At the request of the FAOA President, the Defense Language and National Security Office (DLNSEO) began looking into the possibility of a FAO display in the Pentagon. Getting a new display at the Pentagon is a laborious process that starts with finding a DoD office willing to act as a sponsor, locating an appropriate site in the Pentagon, obtaining approval for the location, funding the display, designing the display, building the display and finally inaugurating and maintaining the display.

Rich Anderson (retired 48E) director of Language and Culture Policy for DLNSEO (and responsible for the Joint FAO Program) has agreed for DLNSEO to sponsor and fund the display, but will do this as a joint DLNSEO/FAO Association project. With the sponsorship and funding pieces in place, COL Rodriguez, Dave Edwards and COL Marisa met with one of the Pentagon curators to look at locations for the FAO display and to discuss the different types of displays. We requested and were finally given authorization for a location in the second floor, A Ring 7/8 Corridor Apex. We chose this location due to its central location and the close proximity to the Humanitarian Relief Operations Display, operations in which many of FAOs have been involved.

We are now looking at designing the display. We are considering a three part display: an area with a historical lineage of the FAO; a display of FAO memorabilia and stories of FAOs in action; and a FAO Hall of Fame/FAO of the Year section. We will also consider any other ideas you might have.

Now the hard part. We need the help of FAOA members. First, we need a volunteer to help out with the design of the display. Anyone with graphic design expertise or any experience designing displays would be very helpful. We will also need for FAOA members to look for items they might have in boxes that they acquired while serving as FAOs would be museum worthy and that you are willing to give up for this display. We are also going to need FAOs to write up significant events and stories (unclassified!!) of FAOs in action and lastly, we will rely on FAOA members for FAO Hall of Fame nominations and selections. Some displays take years to complete. Our goal is to have ours complete in a year.

This will only be possible with your support.

### Past Presidents and Chairmen of the Board of Governors Foreign Area Officer Association

#### Chairman of the Board of Governors\*

1996 – 1999 MG John Ellerson, USA, Ret.  
1999 – 2004 LTG Karl Eikenberry, USA, China FAO  
2004 – 2005 BG Kevin Ryan, USA, Ret., Eurasia FAO

#### Association Presidents

1996 – 2000 LTC Joseph D. Tullbane III, USA, Ret., Eurasia FAO\*\*  
2000 – 2003 COL Michael Ferguson, USA, Ret., Africa FAO\*\*\*  
2003 – 2005 BG John Adams, USA, Ret., Europe FAO  
2005 – 2009 COL Stephen R. Norton, USA, Ret., Europe FAO\*\*\*  
2009 - 2011 COL Gary D. Espinas, USA, Eurasia FAO  
2011 - Present COL Kurt Marisa, USAF, Europe FAO

\*Since 2005, the President of the FAOA assumed the responsibilities of this position, which was officially eliminated by the current FAOA charter approved in 2009.

\*\*Founder of the FAOA

\*\*\*Member, Defense Attaché System Hall of Fame





## **The US Air Force International Affairs Specialist Program** By Ms. Kathleen Tilbrook, Chief, IAS Force Management, DAF Civilian

Today's dynamic security environment and expeditionary nature of air, space and cyberspace operations require a cadre of Air Force professionals with international insight, foreign language proficiency, and cultural understanding. Professional international Airmen strengthen the Air Force's capability to influence the outcomes of US, allied and coalition operations by maximizing operational capabilities through building relationships with other US government agencies as well as with their foreign counterparts. The International Affairs Specialist (IAS) Program is a Force Development initiative that offers Airmen the opportunity to fully develop these key military core competencies. The importance of and necessity for the IAS Program continues to grow as Building Partnerships remains at the forefront of national defense.

Typically, officers are competitively selected for IAS development at mid-career (7-12 years commissioned service) and receive formal training and education with an appropriate follow-on assignment(s) within one of two distinct development paths. The Pol-Mil Affairs Strategist, or PAS, will do this as a well-managed, career broadening opportunity to gain international political-military affairs knowledge through education and experience. The Regional Affairs Strategist, or RAS (formerly Foreign Area Officer), is a more demanding developmental opportunity with multiple IAS assignments designed to create a regional expert with professional language skills. The IAS program

office carefully manages each officer to make sure he or she remains viable and competitive in their primary AFSC while developing a strong foundation in international affairs.

### **Regional Affairs Strategist (RAS)** **AFSC 16F**

This development opportunity is geared to create a cadre of officers with in-depth regional expertise using a dual career path concept. RAS development ideally begins between 7 to 10 years commissioned service, although there are a limited number of RAS opportunities that exist for officers beyond this 7-10 year time frame. Most officers will earn a regional master's degree from the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), receive 6 to 15 months of language training at the Defense Language Institute (DLI), and also complete a total of 6 months immersed in their assigned region on a SAF/IA-sponsored RAS Immersion. Others will earn RAS designation by attending foreign-speaking international Intermediate Developmental Education (IDE) or Senior Developmental Education (SDE), or by completing the Olmsted Scholar Program or the Mansfield Fellowship Program.

The Air Force also capitalizes on skills already present in the officer corps. Officers not selected for deliberate development but possess all the skills required for a RAS position, may qualify for RAS certification upon approval. These officers, who have excelled in strategic positions such as attaché, security cooperation officer and certain international military personnel exchange positions are directly utilized in future IAS positions, provided all DoD requirements are met.

RAS officers serve alternating assignments between their primary and IAS career fields. They combine in-depth international experience and professional level language skills with their existing operational Air

For more information on the USAF's IAS career field and other International Affairs information, SAF/IA has a good informational web site at:

[www.safia.hq.af.mil/  
InternationalAffairsSpecialist](http://www.safia.hq.af.mil/InternationalAffairsSpecialist)

### **Quotable Quote ...**

*(When fighting the beltway tasking process)*

*" ... there can be no task-ation without representation."*

*- Col Brian Kelly, USAF (Retired)*



Force knowledge necessary to continue their development into senior leaders. They typically serve as attachés, security cooperation officers, regional planning staff officers, country desk officers at Headquarters AF or Combatant Commands (COCOMS), and other Air Force components. Where possible, an assignment in the primary career field-related position should ideally occur within the RAS geographic area of specialization, based on the needs of the Air Force. This allows continued RAS skills development while serving in the primary career field. This demanding dual career track is carefully managed by the IAS program office to ensure officers remain competitive and viable in both their primary and IAS career paths.

**Political-Military Affairs Strategist (PAS)**  
**AFSC 16P**

This development opportunity is specifically geared to give our proven junior leaders pol-mil education/experience through a well-managed developmental

assignment opportunity. PAS development occurs in conjunction with selection for IDE. Officers designated on this IAS development path accomplish a one-year pol-mil oriented IDE program to receive an international affairs-related advanced degree. Programs include Air Command and Staff College with focused pol-mil training, English-speaking international IDE, or the USAF POLAD internship. PAS designates will then serve in an international pol-mil affairs assignment post-IDE or SDE. Further developmental opportunities on the PAS track may be available as determined by the primary career field functional development team and the needs of the Air Force.

The Air Force IAS program is still a relatively young program compared to those of the Army, Navy and Marine Corps. The Chief of Staff of the Air Force outlined the new IAS program in his 6 April 2005 Sight Picture, calling for “a Force Development culture change that will develop a global cadre for international affairs” through officers attending “comprehensive Developmental Education programs aimed at developing a strong foundation in international affairs, while remaining fully proficient and competitive in their primary AFSCs.” The International Airmen Division (SAF/IAPA) began deliberately developing officers in 2006, later incorporating the joint Foreign Area Officer (FAO) certification requirements as outlined in DoD Instruction 1315.20 published in 2007. The first class of certified IAS officers graduated in 2008, and accessions have grown steadily each year.

The success of the IAS Program depends on selection of the right officers and full commitment of carefully managed deliberate development by the primary career field.

## FAOs On Tap!

... it's a “FAO Mixer”

Our September mixer was highly successful so your Board of Governors is going to make these mixers routine events

Our last event was at Sine's Irish Pub and Restaurant in Arlington, near the Pentagon. Given the positive feedback we received, we will likely continue to “mix at Sine's”.

**The exact date of the next “FAOs On Tap” is not yet determined, we are planning mixers roughly quarterly. The next mixer will be after the Banquet — perhaps in June.**

Let us know how you thought the event went or give us other ideas for social networking opportunities.

As editor, I request that you share event news and even some casual happy snaps of events so that we can share them with the FAO community ... email the editor at:

**editor@FAOA.org**

### **About the Author ...**

Mrs. Kathleen Tilbrook is the Chief of Force Management for the Air Force International Affairs Specialist Program, assigned to the Pentagon since March 2011. She spent seven years as an active duty officer and operated on both the European and African continents in support of joint missions and exercises. In addition to her civilian duties, she is currently a support officer in the Air Force Reserves. Mrs. Tilbrook holds a Bachelor's degree in Modern Languages from Wright State University, and is finishing her Master's in International Relations from Webster University.



## Obituary – Lt Col John Loftis, USAF, FAO and Af-Pak Hands

By: Lt Col Cheryl Garner, USAF, ACC/IA Af-Pak Hands Program Manager

**Lieutenant Colonel John Loftis**, Plans Chief for the National Police Coordination Center, Kabul, Afghanistan, was one of two U.S. military officers killed by an Afghan at the Ministry of Interior on 25 February 2012. Lt Col Loftis is survived by his wife, Holly, and their two daughters Alison (13) and Ainsley (10).

Born in Indiana on 22 February 1968, Lt Col Loftis grew up in western Kentucky. He graduated in 1990 from Vanderbilt University with a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering and then entered the Peace Corps, spending three years in New Guinea focusing on village development. In 1995 he joined the Air Force and was assigned to the Peacekeeper ICBM Missile Wing at F.E. Warren AFB, Wyoming.

Loftis was later trained as a FAO in 2007, completing a Master of Arts in Security Studies at the Naval Postgraduate School and the Pashto Program (with honors) at the Defense Language Institute. After completing training, he was assigned to the U.S. Air Force Special Operations School (USAFSOS), Hurlburt Field, Florida, as a South and Central Asia Affairs instructor. In 2009

he deployed to Afghanistan, serving as both a FAO and Information Operations Office on Provincial Reconstruction Team Zabul, and was selected to the Af-Pak Hands program upon his return.

As an Afg-Pak Hands member, Lt Col Loftis received four months of training in Dari after

which he deployed to Kabul Afghanistan in March 2011 as the National Police Coordination Center Plans Chief. Loftis was responsible for coordinating security transition plans between the Afghan Ministry of Interior and ISAF Joint Command.

LtCol Loftis's awards include the Bronze Star (2) (posthumously), The Purple Heart (posthumously), Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal, and the Army Achievement Medal as well as other unit and campaign awards.

He was fluent in Pashto and had a working knowledge of Dari and Arabic.





## The Navy FAO Community - A Single-Track Story

By: Captain H.C. "Jim" Kim, PACOM FAO

OPNAV N522 International engagement Branch Head  
and FAO Community Advisor

The unique nature of the global maritime environment and the U.S. Navy's role in advancing cooperative sea power in support of national security creates a vast demand for a Foreign Area Officer (FAO) community with a distinct maritime focus. Our Navy has been a "global navy" since inception. "A Cooperative Strategy for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Sea Power (CS-21)," signed by the three Maritime Service Chiefs in October 2007, states: "Preventing war is as important as winning wars...Although our forces can surge when necessary to respond to crises, trust and cooperation cannot be surged." Over 90 percent of world trade happens in the Maritime Domain. In a time defined by limited resources, the Navy cannot put every ship to sea in an attempt to cover 140 million square miles of ocean. We must go out and seek those in the international community who are willing to engage in mutually beneficial relationships to help us obtain the goal of maximizing maritime security.

The recent U.S. strategy, "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Defense", states that "the United States must continue to promote regional security, [and] promote enhanced capacity, and interoperability for coalition operations." Finding global solutions to these global challenges is not a luxury, but a core capability that must be developed and further incorporated into our strategic picture of power projection abroad. Vice relying on the kinetic fire power of our fleet, the Navy of the future will be more dependent on specialized tools to carry out the "Sailing Directions" of CNO Greenert. One of these specialized tools is the Navy's cadre of Foreign Area Officers who possess a vital combination of cultural knowledge, language expertise, and operational experience that effectively act as a fleet force multiplier by forging critical relationships worldwide before, during, and after a conflict.

The Navy Foreign Area Officer Community is a single career track and is about half way through its building plan. The community was established over five years ago under the guidance of then CNO Admiral Mullen who clearly recognized the importance of developing the Navy's foreign engagement

capabilities. With the creation of a unique designator (1710), Navy FAO stood up as a separate independent community on 05 September 2006. The current plan is to reach Full Operational Capability (FOC) by FY 2015 with a total of 400 officers in the community, with 300 in operational and 100 in training billets. These billets were selected to deliver FAO expertise to major staffs, US Embassies, the inter-agency, and other key foreign liaison positions. Today, Navy FAOs serve in 47 countries forming a core capability to communicate in 29 languages. In 2010 an important milestone was reached when RADM (sel)

Douglas Venlet, currently serving as Defense Attaché Russia, was chosen as Navy's first FAO Flag Officer. He will receive his second star this summer and is slated to replace RADM Landolt as OPNAV N52, Director of International Engagement, where in addition to orchestrating the Navy's international policy and engagement strategy, he will assume responsibility for the overall health of the Navy FAO community.

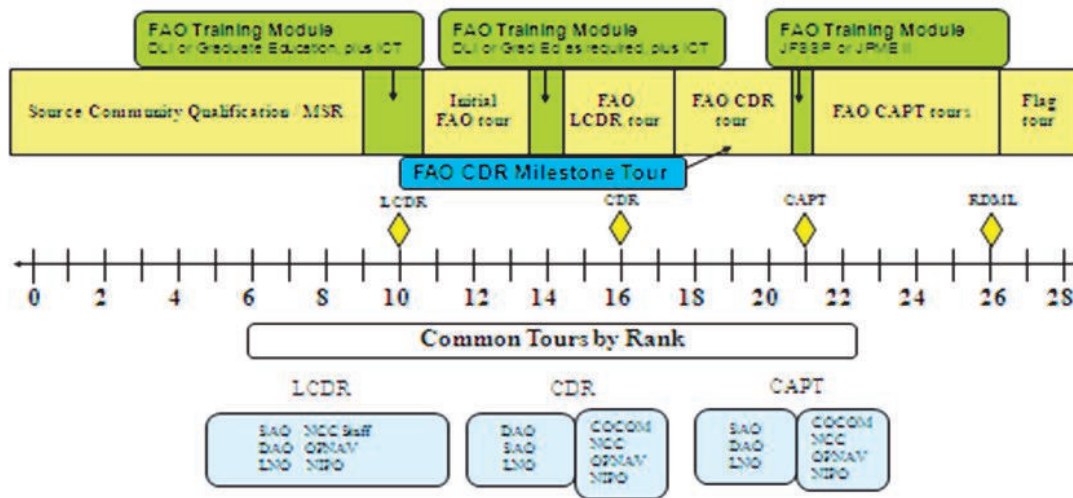
Selection for Navy FAO is highly competitive with the most recent board choosing only one of every five candidates. Officers desiring to become FAOs must submit a comprehensive application package to a lateral transfer board which is held semi-annually (June and November). URL officers, who typically apply after achieving their primary warfare qualification and an average of eight years commissioned service, already possess extensive



LCDR Raja Hussain, Navy FAO, with Pakistani Officers



### FAO CAREER PATH



**NAVY FAO CAREER PATH AND COMMON TOURS BY RANK**

operational experience in the surface, subsurface, and aviation communities. In addition to outstanding overall performance in the fleet, the board favors those with experience living abroad, existing language skills, and a regionally focused master's degree – typically very difficult to achieve in conjunction with a warfare specialty. After selection and accession into the community, a new FAO is assigned a geographic AOR (AFRICOM, CENTCOM, EUCOM, PACOM, or SOUTHCOM) followed by related intensive foreign language training. FAOs then typically serve as Naval Attachés or Navy representatives at an Office of Security Cooperation during their first overseas tour in their assigned AOR. Subsequent tours include major staffs, numbered fleet staffs, in-country Senior Defense Officials, Defense Attachés, and Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC) Chiefs. Prior to achieving O-5 and O-6, FAO records are carefully reviewed and screened for O-5 command and O-6 major command equivalent billets. Senior O-6 and Flag Officer jobs are oriented towards shaping major Navy international policy and engagement.

Today's FAOs span the globe filling 84% of all Navy Security Assistance billets and 94% of all Navy ODC Chiefs. Additionally, 67% of all Navy SDO/DATT and 41% of Naval Attaché billets are filled by FAOs. Overall, 82% of FAO billets are outside the United States and 60% require foreign language skills.

Navy FAOs are critical in recognizing the changes in their host countries as well as the local and regional maritime domain. FAO expertise will continue to play

a major role in allowing our Navy to adapt to these often rapidly changing contexts, and prepping the battle space to facilitate a range of options from small scale coalition exercises to full scale naval operations. As trusted advisors to national and senior Navy decision makers, Combatant Commanders, Country Teams, and the inter-agency, FAOs can apply their valuable regional experience gained while living and working abroad among our friends – and sometimes potential adversaries – to focusing the critical resources of our Navy towards actions and areas that maximize their impact in support of US policy. This not only includes the US Navy, but also the assets of our regional allies and friends in pursuit of common goals. Establishment of long-term relationships that ensure cooperation from our allies in times of need require persistent presence and consistent engagement at a level afforded by the experience of a cadre of specially trained Foreign Area Officers.

We are about 50% complete in the long process of creating a community of experts within our Navy who can apply their skills to achieve the goals of our broader Maritime Strategy. Our Foreign Area Officers are charged with building the political capitol on a global scale necessary to ensure the security of the high seas and our nation. WE CANNOT SURGE TRUST. When the critical time comes that requires employment of the fleet, FAOs will help lead the way - by leveraging the trust and cooperation of our friends and allies in a unified effort towards mission accomplishment.

Please join the FAOA Board of Governors  
for the

## Foreign Area Officer Association Annual Black Tie Banquet

**19 April 2012**

Mixer starts at 6:00 PM and proceedings start at 7:00 PM

Keynote Speaker:

**James R. Clapper, Lt Gen, USAF (Ret)**  
**Director of National Intelligence**

**Location:** The Army Navy Country Club, 1700 Army Navy Drive, Arlington, VA.  
(Note: This is not the Army Navy Club in DC)

**Attire:** Black Tie – Tuxedo/formal evening gown and military personnel equivalent.

### **Open Bar Included**

*FAOA is a professional organization serving the interests of FAOs, Military Attachés, Security Cooperation specialists, and other International Affairs professionals from all services of the U.S. Armed Forces: active duty, reserve, retired, and DoD civilians.*

*FAOA provides advocacy, networking, and mentorship in the core FAO competencies of Security Cooperation, Political-Military Affairs, and Intelligence*

Register online at [www.FAOA.org](http://www.FAOA.org)

Register not later than: **2 April 2012**



**The Event benefits the new FAOA Scholarship Fund**





## “We have fought in every clime and place, where we could take a gun”

By LtCol Ché Bolden and Maj Jon Brown

*The Marine Corps is America’s Expeditionary Force in Readiness — a balanced air-ground-logistics team. We are forward-deployed and forward-engaged: shaping, training, deterring, and responding to all manner of crises and contingencies.*

*We create options and decision space for our Nation’s leaders. Alert and ready, we respond to today’s crisis, with today’s force — TODAY.*

*Responsive and scalable, we team with other services, allies and interagency partners. We enable and participate in joint and combined operations of any magnitude. A middleweight force, we are light enough to get there quickly, but heavy enough to carry the day upon arrival, and capable of operating independent of local infrastructure. We operate throughout the spectrum of threats — irregular, hybrid, conventional — or the shady areas where they overlap. Marines are ready to respond whenever the Nation calls ... wherever the President may direct.*

### **Commandant’s Planning Guidance, Oct 2010**

1stLt Presley O’ Bannon used his cultural familiarity to help cobble together an effective coalition force of Marines and Arab soldiers in the First Barbary War to seize a strategic objective – the fortress at the port of Derna on “the shores of Tripoli.”

Immortalized in the **Marines’ Hymn**, the ethos of the Marine Corps is well represented by the motto, “*Any Clime, Any Place*.” Our International Affairs Program (IAP) epitomizes that premise as we prepare Marine subject-matter experts to understand complex foreign environments, apply cultural context and language ability to inform Marines at all levels, and provide an essential element to Operating Forces capability. By preparing Marines in Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture (LREC) skill sets, the IAP postures the Marine Corps for success through the provision of these professionals at every level.

This article will inform the reader on the role of International Affairs in Marine Corps operations, and explain the unique circumstances that make a dual-track career progression model the right solution for Marine International Affairs Professionals, particularly Foreign Area Officers (FAO). It is structured in four parts: Part 1 provides a brief history of the Marine Corps and how the FAO program has evolved; Part 2 explains the significance of the dual-track career progression model; Part 3 discusses the program application of the IAP; and Part 4 concludes with our desired end state.

Hundreds of Marines served in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua between the World Wars, employing both their military skills and LREC capabilities.

### **A Brief History of FAOs in the Marine Corps**

Since its founding on 10 November 1775, the Marine Corps has been challenged with complex problems from all angles. It has endured efforts intended to limit its functionality, divest it of its components, or disband it entirely. It has been tasked with “unwinnable” fights. Time and again, the Corps has been successful in overcoming all challenges by re-inventing itself and adapting to the needs of the nation through agility and innovation. Particular to international relations and foreign engagement, the creativity of individual Marines, throughout our history, has ensured the continued relevance of the Corps. Some key examples illustrate this point:

The iconic Marines, who blazed new paths and leveraged their unique experiences of foreign cultures and regional knowledge – on an *ad hoc* basis to better enhance their abilities as war-fighters – can be considered the forbearers of the modern International Affairs Professional.

### **Quotable Quote ...**

*“Never ascribe to malice that which can be explained by incompetence.”*  
- Tim Cole

Share your quotes with the editor ... [editor@faoa.org](mailto:editor@faoa.org)



### The Modern International Affairs Program

The FAO program began in the early 1980s as a formalized program to develop LREC skills in the Marine Corps. To counteract a trend of career stagnation and under employment of the small FAO community, the Marine Corps took steps to maximize the return on investment of these Marines and take full advantage of their unique skills. Originally focused on language skill and overseas immersion only, the program eventually moved to incorporate regionally focused graduate-level education in 1997. In 1999, the International Affairs Officer Program was formally created, with the intent of providing occupational field sponsorship and advocacy at the Service level. As a result, a FAO's career is now carefully managed and guided through coordinated efforts between the International Affairs Branch, Plans, Policies and Operations (G3/G5) and Manpower and Reserve Affairs (G1) to maintain operational relevance of the individual Marine while maximizing their utilization in FAO assignments.

Drawing on regional expertise gained as a company commander in the Philippines and travel throughout the Pacific, LtCol Earl "Pete" Ellis drafted the prescient "*OpPlan 712 – Advanced Base Operations in Micronesia*," which two decades later became the blueprint for U.S. amphibious operations in the Western Pacific.

### Every Marine a Rifleman

The recent DoD Strategic Defense Guidance highlights a shift in national defense posture that will rely increasingly upon expeditionary forces and strategic presence. As stated in the CPG, the Marine Corps is "*forward-deployed, forward engaged*" 24/7/365. It was that way prior to Operation Enduring Freedom, and it will be so post Operation Enduring Freedom. At any given time, roughly one eighth of Marine Forces are operating somewhere other than their primary duty station, and Marines with LREC skills are vital to the success of those deployed forces.

The principal Marine Corps method of deployment and employment is the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF), which comprises a Command Element (CE), Ground Combat Element (GCE), Aviation Combat Element (ACE) and Logistics Combat Element (LCE). The effectiveness of the MAGTF is founded in each Marine performing his function in support of the MAGTF concept. Each Primary Military Occupational Specialty (PMOS) has an important and indispensable role, and the lean personnel structure of the Marine Corps makes it essential that all Marines maintain currency in their primary MOSs. By maintaining credibility as "MAGTF Officers," current in their PMOSs and experienced in MAGTF operations, Marine FAOs maintain credibility and relevance. The Marine Corps has chosen to establish a "dual-track" for FAOs—FAOs alternate between tours of duty in their PMOS and in FAO billets. The dual-track program allows Marine FAOs to remain competitive with their peers in the ranks of Major, Lieutenant Colonel, and Colonel. This dual-track system has proved very effective in meeting the needs of the Corps and enhancing the career viability of FAOs.

The Marine Corps stresses the dual-track nature of the International Affairs Program because the value of FAO training comes with Marines, competent in their primary MOS, able to apply their war-fighting skills intelligently in foreign environments across a range of missions. The FAO designation, as well as the other IAP designations, is considered a Free MOS (FMOS), meaning it is open to officers from any PMOS, but it does not replace the PMOS. It identifies those Marines with LREC skills as outlined in the Department of Defense Directive 1315.17, Military Department Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Programs.

The International Affairs Branch (PLU-8) resides in the Strategy and Plans Branch (PL) of Headquarter Marine Corps Plans, Policies, and Operations (PP&O).

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Because of the unique nature of the MAGTF, and its building block approach to achieve sums of capability greater than its parts, the value of the IAP rests in the ability of LREC professionals to bring those skills to bear in MAGTF operations. As such, the Marine Corps is willing to accept the degradation of perishable skills (especially language proficiency) that results from these alternating tours, because it maintains the operational relevance of our FAOs. Since 2010, the Marine Corps has placed greater emphasis on language sustainment to help maintain those perishable language skills during PMOS tours.

The diplomacy and ability to negotiate the cultural landscape displayed by Gen Tony Zinni as Commander, US CEMTCOM, further exhibits the resourcefulness that has kept the Marine Corps relevant. These Marines facilitated the development of new and improved methods to conduct amphibious and expeditionary operations.

Like Boy Scouts, who leave a campsite better than they found it, FAOs apply their skills to advise and inform Marine commanders with a better understanding of complex cultural environments. They positively influence interaction with foreigners (civilian, government representatives and military forces), and build a common operating picture with historic, social, religious and cultural context. This FAO skill set provides the commander a capability that allows the MAGTF to plan and operate more effectively and efficiently.

FAS – Foreign Area Staff Non Commissioned Officer - A senior enlisted Marine empowered with advanced level, regionally focused education; developed language ability; and real-world experience in the region. RAS – Regional Affairs Staff Non-Commissioned Officer – A senior enlisted Marine empowered with regionally Focused education.

**Program Application across the Range Of Military Operations (ROMO)**

As referenced in the National Security Strategy, National Defense Strategy, Quadrennial Defense Review and the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap, the LREC continuum extends from General Purpose Forces (GPF), through surge capabilities, and culminates at the pinnacle with professionals educated and trained in all LREC competencies. The IAP oversees programs that address the surge and professional levels of the continuum. Today, the development of LREC skill sets includes regionally focused graduate education, language development, and overseas immersion.

The capacity to surge provides the Marine Corps with a capability to prepare Marines to fill advisory roles in areas where we are thin in LREC expertise. Surge Marines have limited language abilities and micro-region specificity, and serve in positions of operational importance that help build partner capacity. The Afghanistan-Pakistan Hands (APH) program is an example of this capability.

The professional level of the continuum is populated with our FAO / RAO and FAS / RAS Marines. They are imbued with higher levels of language proficiency, regional expertise and graduate level education as dictated by DODD 1315.17.

An inherent advantage of the dual-track nature of the Marine program is that it allows the IAP to provide the Marine Corps and the Joint force with LREC-capable Marines at all levels – tactical, operational, and strategic. The assignment process for FAOs/RAOs focuses on placing those Marines in service, Joint/combined, and interagency staffs. The placement of our surge capability is focused on building partner capacity and augmenting the operational commands with individuals with nuanced training, background and regional expertise. Perhaps the most significant capability within the IAP is the nascent FAS/RAS program, intended to develop LREC skills among senior enlisted Marines for employment by tactical commanders. This program is currently in BETA test, with 9 Staff Non-Commissioned Officers currently immersed in a tailored training pipeline to hone their LREC skills. The first FAS will report to his operational unit in March 2012.

BGen Evans Carlson leveraged his China experience, and his observations of Chinese military practice, to form “Carlson’s Raiders,” a highly successful, if short-lived, WWII commando unit.

**Desired End State**

The application of LREC skills across MAGTF operations, from strategy development through planning and into operations, is rapidly becoming a

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functional area of war-fighting. The existence of MAGTF Officers and Staff NCOs empowered with LREC skill sets will be vital to the success of the Marine Corps in the future operating environment. Operationally relevant, regionally focused and culturally savvy, these Marines are poised to provide sound leadership at all levels for the foreseeable future.

As a company-grade officer, Gen Robert Barrow, 27<sup>th</sup> Commandant of the Marine Corps, was part of the Sino-American Cooperative Organization that trained and equipped Chinese guerrillas during Japanese occupation of central China.

The Marine Corps approach to International Affairs is tailored and unique to our requirements as a service. The application of the LREC skill set at all levels of command facilitates real-time inject of cultural and regional concerns of the human terrain. The program has the full support of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and is in keeping with the guiding documents and initiatives from the Joint Staff and the Office of the Secretary of the Defense.

## About the Authors:

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Major Jonathan Brown is the FAO/RAO Coordinator (PLU-8), Strategy and Plans (PL), Plans, Policies and Operations (PP&O), Headquarters Marine Corps. He is a Southeast Asian Foreign Area Officer (AMOS 8248) and a CH-46E Pilot. His LREC skills focus on Indonesia.



## Senator Chuck Hagel - Guest Speaker FAOA Luncheon

Washington D.C. – On Thursday, February 16, 2012, former U.S. Senator and Distinguished Professor at Georgetown University was an honored guest of the Foreign Area Officer Association (FAOA) for their policy luncheon series at the Fort Lesley J. McNair Officer's Club.

In a recent interview with the Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, Senator Hagel stated, "in 1985, the United States cut off all military relationships with Pakistan for thirteen years because they had tested a nuclear weapon and not told us. This period hurt us far worse than it did Pakistan because we lost any influence over the situation there. Relationships with foreign military officers are vital."

Additionally, on August 10, 2011, U.S. Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) Leon Panetta released a memo titled, "Language Skills, Regional Capabilities, and Cultural Capabilities in the Department of Defense (DoD)." His memo emphasized the importance and how critical these skill-sets are to ensure mission readiness in today's dynamic global environment. The Memo states, "our forces must have the ability to effectively communicate with and understand the cultures of coalition forces, international partners, and local populations. DoD has made progress in establishing a foundation for these capabilities, but we need to do more to meet current and future demands." Senator Hagel is also a member of SECDEF Panetta's Defense Policy Board.

To see more about Senator Hagel's comments, go to the FAOA website, or visit the Atlantic Council website where you will find links and full-length MP3 files of the presentations.



## A Language, Regional Expertise, and Cultural (LREC) Triad for Joint Foreign Area Officer Education and Training

By: COL Gary Espinas, U.S. Army, and CDR Jim McMullin, U.S. Navy.

### **Executive Summary**

Monterey, California is the premier location and nexus for Department of Defense (DoD) efforts to educate and train its corps of Joint Foreign Area Officers (FAOs) – DoD's recognized leaders in regional political-military affairs. Through the triad of language, regional expertise, and cultural (LREC) opportunities presented by the co-location in Monterey of the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Department of National Security Affairs, the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC), and the Naval War College – Monterey campus (NWC – Monterey), officers entering the FAO program are able to fulfill Service FAO education requirements in one location. Working with world-class faculties at each of these learning institutions, FAOs can pursue a graduate degree in regional studies at NPS, foreign language study at DLIFLC, and Joint Professional Military Education Phase I (JPME I) at NWC - Monterey. Moreover, these institutions offer the most relevant and cost-effective initial training and education programs for new FAOs.

### **Network**

Through the LREC triad (NPS, DLI, and NWC – Monterey) FAOs are provided the opportunity to develop robust joint, social and professional networks that will be essential in their future job assignments. No other graduate education institution in the United States provides such a densely concentrated, multi-service environment for FAO education. To this end, all four Services send FAOs to NPS for master's degree programs; however for the Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, NPS is the exclusive graduate education provider for FAOs. While at NPS, the development of social and professional bonds among FAOs plays an essential role, which provides advantages beyond the value of classroom education alone. Senior military and civilian leaders are a regular presence at NPS and FAOs are afforded opportunities to interact with them, such as during Army Chief of Staff General Raymond Odierno's recent November 4 visit to NPS. Because of the large population of FAOs at Monterey, the FAO Association of Monterey (FAOAM) has been established at NPS. In addition to hosting speakers, FAOAM organizes an annual conference that attracts FAOs and senior leaders from all over the world.

Although top-tier graduate schools such as Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, offer broad and diverse networking opportunities, NPS offers the most relevant and valuable network for FAOs within the DoD context.

Networks matter in the FAO community, possibly more than in any other profession within the military. *The Navy FAO Manifesto* asserts that "...the primary tool for the FAO is his or her network [and], as a FAO, your network is your weapons system" (Squire 2010). In any organization, the FAO's primary function is to provide the military commander or civilian senior leader with regionally-focused political-military advice and analysis that informs and influences decision making at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. To do this effectively, a successful FAO must be adept at navigating the complex internal DoD and interagency bureaucracies that all too often impede effective whole-of-government approaches to complex defense and military issues. FAOs execute a commander's intent by brokering solutions across international, inter-agency, and inter-service boundaries. A well-developed network of social and professional bonds formed at NPS and DLI offer the FAO the most effective tool for breaking down the barriers that impede the effective execution of a commander's intent. Although there are ways to navigate the bureaucratic waters of the U.S. Government, possessing an established network of personal and professional contacts remains a key enabler that allows an officer to overcome the complex bureaucratic landscape. Friendships among members from all branches of the services developed at NPS and DLI promote inter-service cooperation, which enhances each FAO's ability to perform his or her job over the life of his or her career in government service.

In addition to connections formed with fellow members of the U.S. Armed Forces, FAOs at NPS form strong personal and professional relationships with foreign military officers, who also earn graduate degrees and graduate certificates from NPS. Every foreign military officer assigned to NPS is assigned a U.S. military sponsor for the duration of his or her degree program. The foreign officer sponsorship program often creates lifelong relationships between

U.S. officers and foreign officers. Since the 1950s, NPS has educated over 5,000 officers from 101 different countries (Huber and Roser 2011). Equally impressive, since 1965, the NPS Defense Resource Management Institute (DRMI) has educated over 16,000 foreign military officers from 162 nations (Huber and Roser). Many foreign officers who are NPS alumni have achieved flag and general officer ranks. Notable NPS alumni presently include a king, two ambassadors, six ministers of defense, and a Chairman of the NATO Military Committee (Huber and Roser). Since foreign officers and U.S. families live in the same community, there are numerous opportunities to develop and foster lasting friendships, which can prove beneficial when FAOs are assigned overseas and meet with many of these same officers again.

### ***Educational Focus Tailored to the Needs of the Services – Regional Education***

The Naval Postgraduate School enables the Services to shape the National Security Affairs (NSA) Department curriculum to the needs of the U.S. Government (USG), DoD, and the Joint FAO Community. Represented by the respective FAO proponent offices, the Services gather at NPS every two years to agree upon the educational skill requirements (ESRs) that govern the required content of each FAO degree program and the Joint FAO Skill Sustainment Pilot Program (JFSSPP) for advanced FAO education. Unlike other graduate education programs at civilian institutions such as the Fletcher School, the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), or Stanford, the Services play a participatory role in shaping FAO education at NPS to reflect the dynamic educational needs of the DoD. The challenges presented by Afghanistan and cyberspace represent two such examples whereby NPS has demonstrated that it is uniquely positioned to respond to DoD needs.

Furthermore, the NPS curriculum stems directly from a bottom-up approach that begins with the specific jobs required by each of the Services, such as Defense Attaché, Foreign Area Officer, Political-Military Advisor, and Intelligence Officer (NPS Academic Catalog 2011). In this process, curriculum sponsors establish the key educational attributes for each curriculum-associated subspecialty code by developing a set of core skill requirements (CSRs). NPS faculty members then collaborate with the sponsors from each Service to develop ESRs, which are then translated into required courses of study for officers. When the officer successfully completes the

course of study and capstone requirement, the officer earns a regionally focused graduate degree and a Service-specific subspecialty code/additional designator. No other graduate program can offer such a highly tailored education for the jobs that FAOs will perform.

Even beyond graduate education, NPS continues to provide current and highly relevant advanced FAO education through the JFSSPP. This program offers senior FAOs an opportunity to hone their regional expertise and language skills by working with the NPS and DLI faculty in Monterey for the first week, and then by working with regional experts in-country for the second week. Senior FAOs develop stronger peer-level, inter-service networks throughout the course, and junior FAOs who are in the initial phase of their education and training at NPS and DLI have an opportunity to meet and develop mentoring relationships with senior FAOs during the Monterey portion of the course. JFSSPP represents the paramount contribution of the LREC triad to the Joint FAO community.

The LREC triad proactively responds to the needs of the DoD, the services, and the Joint FAO community with quality education and training that is delivered in a flexible format that supports a FAOs development throughout his or her military career.

### ***Cost-Effective Education***

NPS has a world-class academic faculty comprised of professors drawn from the top PhD-granting institutions in history, political science, and economics. Every member of the faculty is a specialist in an aspect of security studies or in the politics and culture of a specific region. Unlike other graduate programs, faculty, and not research assistants, actually teach all classes.

The cost of this quality education is inexpensive. The LREC triad (NPS, DLI, and NWC – Monterey) drastically reduces the costs for producing FAOs by reducing the number of permanent change of station (PCS) moves and by offering highly competitive tuition rates. According to the Defense Language Office (DLO), "Initial FAO training in FY09 cost an average of \$222,878 per officer" (DLO, 2010). The U.S. Government (USG) and the DoD faces drastic cuts in spending, so savings on enterprises such as FAO production matter to each of the services. According to a *Newsweek* article, an austere fiscal environment and costly service-specific programs prompted then-Secretary of Defense Robert M.

Gates to devise plans to reduce DoD overhead by \$100 billion before 2015 (Barry and Thomas, 2010). The LREC triad offers economies of scope and scale that reduce the costs of producing officers with sophisticated LREC skills that can be uniquely tailored for each service's needs.

First, few graduate-level institutions offer tuition rates that are as competitive as NPS's rates. For FY12, tuition at NPS is \$4,750 per quarter. For FAOs in the 12-month master's program this amounts to \$19,000, and for FAOs in the 15-month master's program this amounts to \$23,750. Air Force Regional Affairs Strategists (RAS), Marine Corps FAOs, and Army FAOs complete a Master of Arts in Security Studies in their region in 12 months in the non-thesis track, which requires preceding or follow-on language training at DLI. Since Navy FAOs have to complete one overseas FAO tour immediately after DLI, Navy FAOs return to NPS to enroll in a 15-month program, which is a thesis track. . Since the Navy funds the NPS annual budget, Navy and Marine Corps FAOs complete the same degree with no direct tuition expenditures by the Department of the Navy. By adding three months to the FAO's degree program, officers also have the option of earning JPME 1 credit through NWC – Monterey. JPME 1 at another institution would require a PCS move and several additional months of in-residence coursework. Hence, the NPS and NWC – Monterey consortium offers the most cost-effective education for FAOs who require a regionally specific graduate degree and JPME 1 credit.

Second, services that use the LREC triad minimize costly PCS moves that are sometimes necessary to provide FAOs with relevant initial training and education for their assigned regional area. Once a new FAO reaches Monterey, California, the officer can earn a graduate education, a foreign language qualification/degree, and JPME 1 credit — within 21 months for a category one language requirement, or 30 months for a category four language requirement. If the FAO pursues his or her initial qualifications at a location other than Monterey, up to three PCS moves may be required. One PCS move can cost as much as \$90,000; on average, a PCS move will cost approximately \$30,000 (Navy Personnel Command 2010). In addition to saving the services from unnecessary expenditures on PCS moves and dislocation allowances, the LREC triad saves the individual military member money through a reduction in the frequency of personal relocation expenditures. Furthermore, a few years in the Monterey area

provide a family with much-needed stability and time to reunite with a service member who has most likely returned from a long and arduous independent tour overseas, such as Afghanistan. Even beyond the personal benefits to the individual military member, the services save money by reducing the number of PCS moves required to produce FAOs.

As discussed, in the current austere fiscal environment, each Service should strongly consider the LREC triad to produce its FAOs. At present, the Air Force, the Marine Corps, and the Navy rely exclusively on Monterey for FAO education and training. The Army, which continues to send FAOs to civilian graduate schools, will probably have more FAOs come to NPS in the future as the Army has reduced advanced civil schooling for FAOs from 18 months to 12 months. Although Intermediate Level Education (ILE) is provided at NPS through NWC-Monterey, Army FAOs go TDY to locations such as Ft. Belvoir because they are funded only for a 12-month degree program while at NPS. Adding ILE to the Army's 12-month master's program should be considered, even if it means lengthening a FAO's program of study.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the LREC triad (NPS, DLI, and NWC–Monterey) promotes personal and professional network development for FAOs, provides highly tailored FAO education and training, and reduces the cost of FAO production for each of the services. Taking full advantage of the LREC triad also means that a FAO can look forward to remaining in one place for an extended period of time, which in today's high operational tempo environment, is another valuable consideration.

### **About the Authors ...**

Colonel Gary Espinas, USA, is a EURASIA FAO who is currently the US Army FAO Chair at Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA. Espinas is a former FAOA President and serves on its Board of Governors.



Commander Jim McMullin, USN, is a PACOM FAO who is currently studying Mandarin Chinese at the DLI-FLC in Monterey, CA.

## Getting more from the Army's FAO Program - A Modest Proposal

By: COL Patrick Anderson, US Army, FAO

The US Army's previous dual-track Foreign Area Officer (FAO) system under Officer Professional Management System II (OPMS II) was a failure and it would be a mistake for the Army to re-introduce it now. OPMS II produced very few successful officers either as operators or as FAOs. Those officers who were successful in the old system were almost never promoted because of anything they did as FAOs. A key question in developing a viable career path for FAOs is, Who will they compete against for promotion? Currently, FAOs compete for promotion against other officers in the Operational Support (OS) functional category which includes Military Intelligence and Signal Corps officers. If FAOs are lumped into any large grouping with operational officers the FAOs will suffer. The Army rightly favors operational experience in grooming officers for positions of senior leadership within its institution. No FAO begrudges this. In fact, FAOs realize more than anyone that they support the operational Army. Therefore, the Army is best served by allowing a small cadre of officers to serve outside the operational mainstream as regional specialists in support of the Army and DoD leadership.

In the old dual track system FAOs were required to spend the requisite six to eight years conducting FAO training and serving in at least one assignment while their peers who remained in their basic branches continued in operational assignments. However, because they were managed together with operational officers, FAOs still had to find a way to fight their way into key operational jobs to be competitive at promotion boards. For example, FAOs were routinely rushing to get back to their basic branch as soon as possible in order to get an OER as an S3 in their file before the Lieutenant Colonels promotion board met. Inevitably, most officers were

forced to favor either their basic branch or FAO due to the limited windows of opportunity on the operational side and just the routine bureaucratic nature of the personnel system. For the officers who attempted to put the time and effort into being competent, well trained FAOs, the result was that they were out of their basic branch for too long and became "atlas" for the operational officers in the basic branches. Officers who attempted to have successful FAO careers were consistently promoted well below the Army averages because they just could not compete – regardless of performance – with officers who remained in operational assignments. FAOs in the old system used to say: "you might have been responsible for peace in the Middle East but if the vehicles in the battalion motor pool are not online, you're toast."

Officers who sit on promotion boards are primarily operational officers from the Maneuver, Fires, and Effects (MFE) branches. It is completely reasonable and understandable for these officers, when viewing basically identical files, to favor the file of an officer from MFE who looks most like the board member (i.e. has held more command, training and operational positions vice the officer who has held jobs as an attaché or security assistance officer). Most officers sitting promotion boards have never dealt with or benefited from a competent FAO serving in a US Embassy in a country of key strategic importance. The two paths (operations and FAO) are worlds removed from one another and the operational officer will, understandably, look with skepticism on the FAO experience.

The Army recognized the failure of the dual-track system in the late 90s and developed a personnel system, OPMS XXI, which allowed FAOs (and other functional areas) to single track. Much of the

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reasoning behind the move was a recognition that the Army needs to develop and promote officers who will serve outside the traditional command and operational career paths. When an officer (usually a Captain) volunteers for the FAO career path he is making a conscious decision to take himself out of the running for Battalion Command and any other type of command for the rest of his career. An exception to this is the recent selection processes for command of Regional Training Battalions in Iraq and Afghanistan where FAOs have been allowed to compete in the selection process. However, the change to a single track system was also recognition that operational officers were better served if many of them were allowed to remain in operational billets. Officers who desired to remain in operational billets did so because they coveted their time near soldiers and the leadership opportunities that came with operational assignments.

The continual problem for the FAO program is that the senior Army leadership does not value it. And why should they? The Army leadership benefits in almost no direct, tangible way from the FAO program. Other than the Strategic Leadership Division in the G3/5/7 (the FAO Proponent Office), FAOs are, by and large, absent from the operational Army. FAOs serve primarily (~75%) in joint billets. The vast majority of FAO billets are in Combatant Commands and US Embassies with a handful of billets in the Joint Staff and Office of the Secretary of Defense. There are very few FAO billets at the operational level or on the Army Staff. Therefore, it is understandable the Army leadership would question the value of a program that seems to give back very little to the institutional Army. However, Army generals who have served in combatant commands have consistently lauded the Army's FAO corps. During the post 9/11 era there is yet to be a theater commander who has not asked for a strengthening of his FAO cadre. In particular, Army generals John Abizaid, David Petraeus, and William (Kip) Ward were vocal advocates of the value and reliance they placed on a competent FAO corps to accomplish the mission of the Combatant Command. Because of the

inherent strategic role of the combatant command and the phase zero activities it oversees, on a daily basis the combatant commander and his staff must rely on the regional expertise, operational language skills, and interagency experience that the FAO corps uniquely possesses. The Army leadership just has no comparable requirement or mandate that causes it to turn for insights and advice from its FAOs.

However, the Army leadership does have a strategic responsibility and FAOs should play an integral role in supporting and executing the strategic mission of the US Army. By virtue of their education and experiences in combatant commands and embassies, FAOs are among the Army's best strategic thinkers. On a regular basis FAOs must be able to sort through complex regional and geopolitical problems and clearly identify the US interest. There is almost no security-related policy proposal that comes out of an embassy or a combatant command that has not been significantly shaped by a FAO along the way. It would only stand to reason that the Army would use such talent and experience to help it develop and execute its own strategic frameworks and concepts. However, the Army's FAO corps is rarely brought to bear on the strategic issues facing the army leadership.

For example, the Army is currently wrestling with big strategic decisions on the size, shape, and focus of the Army in the post OIF / OEF world. Additionally, much is being written about an Air-Sea Battle framework that plays down the need for land forces in the future strategic context. Also, there are speeches and policy statements coming from the Department of State indicating a shift in US foreign policy that will redirect attention on the Asia Pacific region. How might such shifts in strategy impact the Army? How does the Army engage in this discussion? And most important for the FAO community, is the Army leadership leveraging its FAO expertise as it grapples with these tough strategic questions?

I fear most senior Army FAOs would agree that the Army is currently, like it has in the past, not

### **Quotable Quote ...**

*(When fighting the tasking process within the beltway)  
" ... there can be no task-ation without representation."*

*- Col Brian Kelly (R)  
USAF, ACC Director of Staff*

leveraging the talent and experience in its FAO corps to help it negotiate its current strategic challenges. By virtue of their experience and education, FAOs are not only theoreticians of strategy but practitioners. Army FAOs, especially at the O-6 level, have immense experience putting strategy and policy into practice. As the Army wrestles with big strategic questions shaping its future, it only makes sense that it would leverage the experience and expertise of its FAO corps. One way to institutionalize this proposal is to open more opportunities for FAOs to serve on the Army staff in positions that influence and develop the Army strategy.

FAOs should not be dual tracked but perhaps some billets should be identified as “Blended Billets.” The Army currently recognizes three occupational career paths (Functional Areas - FA) outside the traditional operational career path that have a strategic emphasis. Besides FAOs, the Army also produces FA 34, Strategic Intelligence and FA 59 Strategist. The 34 and 59 FAs hold important billets on the Army Staff working directly with Army leadership. Within the Army staff G3, Strategic Plans, Concepts, and Doctrine, International Affairs, Multinational Strategy and Programs are ideal positions for FAOs with broad strategic experience. Within the G2, Foreign Intelligence and Army Foreign Liaison offices are perfect positions for FAOs with DIA and attaché experience. A perfectly reasonable proposal is to make several of these billets and some FAO billets “blended billets” opening them up to all three specialties. This will give FAOs the opportunity to serve closer to Army leadership and allow Army leadership to witness firsthand the value and efficacy

of the FAO program. For example, FAO has approximately 3% of its billets on the Army Staff while 59 Strategist have approximately 12%. Likewise, certain 48 billets that do not require in-depth cultural and language skills could be opened up to 59s and 34s.

Army leadership should get more mileage out of the FAO program. But going back to a failed dual-track personnel system is not the way to achieve this. Rather, the objective should be getting the right person for the right job to serve the Army in the area of strategy and policy development. This requires more thought and consideration from the bureaucratic personnel system than it normally must expend on a handful of assignments. However, with a little attention from leadership, the right officers find their way into the right jobs.

Having served on the edges of the “empire,” FAOs are truly the Army’s strategic scouts. Pulling a few scouts back to the TOC for an occasional debrief is never a bad idea for the commander.

### About the Author ...

Colonel Patrick Anderson, US Army, Africa FAO. Anderson is currently assigned to the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies (NESA) as a US Army War College Fellow. Prior assignments include US Embassy, Djibouti, the Joint Analysis Center, and Africa Command. Anderson is currently researching the Arab Spring revolts, and their impacts on US-African relationships.

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## FAO Single-Tracking and the Key's to a Fulfilling Career

By: John B. Haseman, Colonel, US Army, FAO (Retired)

### Single-tracked Foreign Area Officers.

For years the army personnel management system insisted this was not a possible career choice and encouraged personnel assignment officers to insure that army Foreign Area Officers shuttled back and forth between their basic branch and their functional specialty. The wise officer generally followed that guidance in order to maximize promotion potential. But now the navy and air force military service personnel systems have joined with the army to make single tracking as a FAO a firm career choice.

I first wrote this article for publication in the FAO Journal back in 1999, and was asked to resurrect the article as part of the FAO Journal "International Affairs" special issue on the merits and challenges of FAO single-tracking vs. dual tracking. I was one of the few Foreign Area Officers to single-track as a FAO under the "old" system. For the final 20 years of my 30-year career I had only FAO or school assignments. This resulted in a tremendously interesting and rewarding career, and I made it to O6 in the process. Perhaps the example of my experience will help to inform the debate on which system is "best," keeping in mind always that one man's experience is not a cast-in-stone example of career progression.

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Coyt, Editor

My active duty career ended in January 1995 and much has changed in the world – and in the military assignment systems – since then. But those following the debate on "single vs. dual tracking" might find my experience helpful in showing how a mix of assignments can result in a successful single-track FAO career. Thus, I present this summary not as an "I love me" experience, but as an illustration of what a long (20 years or so) FAO career can mean in terms of assignments, professional education, and career rewards and challenges.

Timing and luck are important because policies and assignment slots change, people extend or curtail their overseas tours of duty, and world events influence – and mandate – career choices. But perhaps captains and majors in particular would find the career possibilities interesting.

My FAO career was unique. I know of no others who had quite the same mix of assignments and experiences as I. Remember that the period from 1975 to 1995 was a period in which the army's personnel policy required alternating assignments between basic branch and non-branch specialty as part of a full career pattern. Yet those times and circumstances allowed me to continuously request, and receive, FAO assignments. Part of this was because Military Intelligence Branch did not begrudge my detail to FAO assignments, because the mix of MI and FAO was a good fit. This compatibility might not exist in other situations, particularly for combat arms officers. Nonetheless it was possible for me, and may well be possible for you, to have a successful 20- or 30-year career by primarily single-tracking in FAO assignments.

### Here's how my career went.

First off, I became a FAO in an unusual way. My interest in Southeast Asia began as a college student and was cemented in stone during two combat assignments in Vietnam. I fell in love with Southeast Asia despite the circumstances of the war, and in particular was attracted to the challenges typified in my second Vietnam assignment as a district-level advisor.

After the Vietnam War I went to Thai language school in 1973 and then to an MI assignment in Thailand. While I was in Thailand In 1974 the former Military

Assistance Training Advisor (MATA) program and a classified intelligence specialization program were combined to form the FAO program. When I found out about the FAO Program I applied for it while a captain in Bangkok. The army personnel system responded quickly. They determined that I had already been language trained (Thai), had a masters degree (which I had earned on my own), and was in an "in-country" assignment. I was instantly blessed as a fully qualified Thai FAO (Note: The original individual country FAO codes for Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines were later consolidated into the Southeast Asia specialty code.) I got no area oriented graduate degree. No in-country training. No foreign staff college. I became an instant FAO. That part of my career experience is unlikely to be repeated today!

Following my Thailand assignment I returned to CONUS to prepare to attend Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth. The assignments folks were kind enough to position me in advance by assigning me to a FAO billet as a war-gamer at the Combined Arms Center. Along the way I was promoted to major. At the start of my CGSC year I asked to sponsor a foreign student officer from Southeast Asia, and was paired with an Indonesian officer. When assignment request time came I asked to go

back to Thailand. The assignments officer's response was, "There are no slots there, but we do have a spot in Indonesia, but you'll have to go back to language school." Of course! Throw me in that briar patch! I spent a great year at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, CA, mostly in a one-on-one mode with three language teachers. That began my career-long affiliation with Indonesia.

My first FAO assignment in Jakarta (1978-1981) was to the security assistance organization there, the Defense Liaison Group (later the Office of the Military Attaché for Defense Programs and now the Office of Defence Cooperation). I spent two years managing the International Military Education and Training (IMET) Program, during which I sent more than 500 Indonesian officers to US military schools. That period laid the foundation for an extensive network of friends that served me well in later assignments in Jakarta. Then I extended my assignment for a third year in order to become the Army Division Chief (an O-5 slot). The request was approved "on the come", and fortunately my selection for lieutenant colonel came shortly after I began the job. My final year was spent managing and coordinating foreign military sales, delivery of equipment, and overseeing army training and schooling for Indonesian officers going to the US.

Reassignment to CONUS took me back to a FAO billet at Fort Leavenworth as Activities Officer for all foreign students at CGSC. I planned to spend three years at Fort Leavenworth, so I bought a house and settled in to my assignment working with more than 100 foreign officers attending CGSC.

Less than six months later I got a call from the FAO assignments officer asking "Did you really mean it when you said you would go back to Asia at any time?" Well, yes, I meant it, and, surprise, they wanted me to go back after less than a year in CONUS to be the Assistant Army Attaché in Jakarta. Instead of three settled years at Fort Leavenworth I got 11 months.

This was one of those coincidences where good luck and timing – as well as my willing availability – all worked to my advantage. It seems that the officer originally selected for the assignment was deemed unacceptable by the host country military, based on prior experience with him. This is an important lesson: assignments can, and are, influenced by the host country. I was asked to be the Assistant Army Attaché, a billet that required both FAO and fixed-wing pilot qualifications (the Jakarta Defense Attaché

## Elections! Board of Governors

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Office was one of several with a C-12 aircraft). But because of the short-notice assignment, the Defense Attaché (DATT) was told he could have a pilot or a FAO but not an officer with both qualifications. Presented with potential candidates in both specialties, the DATT chose to have a FAO and get by with one less pilot in the military community. He chose me from a portfolio of files sent to him by the assignments office. That's how I got back to Jakarta.

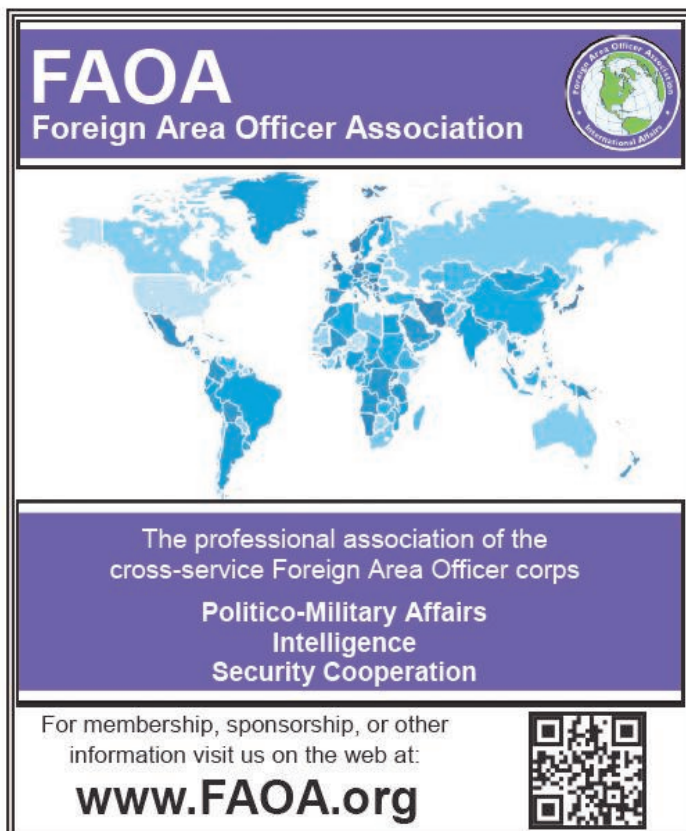
This illustrates another important factor. I did not know personally the Defense Attaché who picked me, and he did not know me. He had the cold facts of my career background to look at. But he also had anecdotal references from many people who knew me personally – the assignments officer, people on the embassy staff with whom I had previously worked, and senior officers in the Indonesian armed forces who knew me from my previous three years in Jakarta. The reputation you build along the way DOES stay with you, and fortunately for me I had established myself as a professional, and others had confidence in me. So off I went to Jakarta again (1982-1985) for the first of an eventual three assignments in the Defense Attaché System (DAS).

I had a great time in my first attaché assignment. Contacts I had made with young captains were now colonels and brigadier generals so I had good access

to senior Indonesian military officers. I loved Indonesia, with its multi-cultural, multi-ethnic population and the most beautiful scenery in Southeast Asia. In my three years I traveled extensively, and had three very successful years in the attaché business. On the career advancement side, I applied for and was approved to begin the two-year Army War College correspondence studies program – a key professional education requirement for promotion to colonel. The selection process is different now, but the importance of AWC has not changed. You CAN take it by correspondence and complete successfully with resident students later on. I completed that course during the summer of my return to the U.S.

I returned to CONUS in 1985 and at my request was assigned to the army staff at the Pentagon. I became the senior Southeast Asia Analyst in the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence (later Deputy Chief of Staff – DCSINT and now called G2). It was a FAO billet, not an MI slot. My time in ACSI benefited again from fortuitous timing. In 1985 the start of the "People Power" movement in the Philippines brought that country to the front pages of the world's newspapers – and to a high priority for the Army Staff. For many months I was the Army point of contact for intelligence and analysis on the situation in the Philippines. I coordinated papers throughout the intelligence community. More importantly, I spent many hours briefing my bosses within ACSI as well as the ACSI himself, as well as others on the Army staff. I got a lot of "face time" with the Army Chief of Staff (General Wickham) and Vice Chief (General DePuy), and an Assistant G3 by the name of Norman Schwartzkopf. I accompanied the Chief of Staff on a quiet visit of encouragement to his Philippine counterpart, General Fidel Ramos, who of course later on became President of The Philippines.

About the time that the Philippine situation resolved itself I started reading the O6 FAO vacancy list. This was 1985-86, and I confirmed with the FAO and DAS personnel offices that the Defense Attaché billet in Jakarta would come open in 1990. Hoping to be promoted to Colonel, I wanted my career arranged to be available for that assignment. But by happy coincidence (remember, timing is important) I also found out that there was a vacancy in 1987 for the Defense Attaché billet in Burma, and no candidate had surfaced. I told the assignments folks that I wanted that job, because the timing was such that I could go to Burmese language school, agree in advance to a three year assignment in Burma instead




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of the required two years, and then transition directly to the DATT assignment in Jakarta.

The assignments officers agreed that it was a good fit. But there were several challenges to be overcome. First I had to be selected for promotion to colonel. Second, I had to be released from my army staff job "ahead of term" – in other words, get out of the Pentagon after only one year on the army staff. I took my request to my boss, the ACSI. I will always be grateful to the late Lieutenant General Sidney ("Tom") Weinstein for his perceptive understanding. After looking me straight in the eyes and asking "is this what you really want? I assured him that I had given it a lot of thought, and wanted to pursue a career in the attaché system. He approved my release from the army staff and I entered Burmese language training at the State Department – studying my third Southeast Asian language. I was selected for promotion to Colonel. And so off I went to Burma.

I wish I could say that my three years as Defense Attaché in Burma (1987-1990) was a completely happy assignment. Burma itself is a wonderful country, with friendly, gracious people and a fascinating culture and history. Unfortunately it was afflicted with one of the world's most ruthless military dictatorships – the "counterparts" with whom I interacted as a major part of my duties as Defense Attaché.

After experiencing the inspiring period of pro-democracy demonstrations, which brought literally millions of Burmese people past the front of our Embassy, we also had to experience the brutal repression of those demonstrations by the Burmese

military. This is where I learned the hard lessons that not every government is nice, not every government subscribes to American principles, not every good populace gets direct US military help, and dealing with such governments and living in such an environment is tough duty. There are many such countries remaining in the world today and there are Defense Attaché Offices in most of them. Duty in such places is stressful, particularly when as "boss" you must insure the safety and welfare of your subordinates and their families. That is part of the FAO's career and lifestyle. I spent two of my three years in Burma as a front-line critic of the Burmese military, in accordance with U.S. policy – and my own conscience – and at the direction of and in total agreement with the courageous and able U.S. Ambassador to Burma. The Burmese military was not pleased.

My assignment in Burma was a tremendous challenge, one that I enjoyed both for knowing the people of Burma and for the privilege of serving on the front line of American foreign policy. But I didn't enjoy the Burmese army rifles pointed inside my car window, or the tank guns leveled at our embassy staff convoy. I'm glad we only had to do one evacuation of Embassy families, and that the really dangerous period was only three months long. What you do on duty lives after you too – I was made officially *persona non grata* in Burma for much of the time since the end of my assignment there. That means it has been difficult to return as a tourist to visit the people and places I came to like so much.

The career plan I established for myself worked out just fine. In 1990 I transferred directly from Burma to Indonesia, and began a four-year period as Defense Attaché in Jakarta. All of the friendships formed during my first two assignments in Indonesia came to fruition. Officers I had met as young captains and majors were now the senior leaders of the Indonesian armed forces. Our friendship, based on mutual trust and understanding forged during years of personal contact, gave me an unusual degree of access to the leadership of the country.

The Indonesia military played a major role in government then, and still does today. I became the Embassy's point man on a variety of issues, military and non-military. Human rights, labor rights, hydrology, and medical research became as important to my daily work plan as the more traditional components of attaché duty and responsibility for the security assistance program. My

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prior experience in Indonesia made me an important part of the Country Team's deliberations on policy recommendations and implementation. It was the high point of my military career.

I left Jakarta in 1994 for a final six months at Fort Leavenworth, and retired in 1995. In my retirement in western Colorado I spend much of my time writing for publication – on Indonesia and Southeast Asia – and doing the occasional consultation project on the region for government agencies, academia, and think tanks. I travel back to Asia several times a year and I have maintained my friendships and contacts in Thailand, Indonesia, and other countries in the region. I am active as an officer in two organizations with direct interests in Southeast Asia – the Foreign Area Officers Association and Counterparts (members were advisors in Vietnam during that war).

In effect I am a true "retired FAO". My interest in the region has not ceased with my retirement from the army. From time to time I return to Washington for short consultations on Indonesia with government agencies and think tanks, and I actively follow political-military developments in Indonesia and the region.

I had a full and rewarding career, 20 years of it single tracking as a Southeast Asia FAO, and I would not

have changed a bit of it. Admittedly, luck and timing were important to my career pattern. But the important thing is that I worked hard to influence the luck and timing by taking an active role in managing my career.

The assignments I had will occur in most FAO career patterns today. Overseas, I served in both security assistance and attaché billets. In CONUS I was assigned to a major command (the Combined Arms Center) and the army education system (CGSC) as well as on the Army Staff. I fitted in professional military education along the way. The one career stop I missed, which is important in FAO career progression, is assignment to the regional major command or army component – in my case, Pacific Command and US Army Pacific. I strongly recommend assignment to the major command in the region of your specialization because it provides the worldview of policy and programs in which you become involved in your in-country assignments. In a full career of single-track FAO assignments, that step is far more likely to come into your career progression.

To summarize, here are some of my "lessons learned" that I commend to you as you plan your own FAO career.

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1. You must take an active role in planning and managing your own career. Find out what jobs are available for that next assignment, and the "next-next" one. Stay informed on what future career opportunities may be available to you. Be a chess player -- plan your career several moves in advance. Your personnel assignments officers will appreciate your participation in the process and help all they can to make it work.

2. The personal and professional reputation you establish in both duty and off-duty performance along your career path will be key to your success. Your work with fellow military personnel is only part of it. The civilians you will work with in embassy assignments abroad and in major headquarters in CONUS will also become important as "the word" about you spreads. Also important is "the word" among the host country military officers with whom you work. Remember the negative example of that unfortunate guy whose "unsuitability" created the vacancy that made it possible for me to go back to Jakarta even though I was not a pilot. Work hard and make sure that "the word" about you is positive, professional, knowledgeable, adaptable, and oriented toward multi-agency and international team play.

3. Timing is important. So is luck. Sometimes they work for you and sometimes they don't. Your challenge is to give luck and timing the best possible chance to work on your behalf.

4. Duty locations that were terrific good fun as a captain or major might not seem so attractive when you are a lieutenant colonel or colonel. Your family has priorities. So do the armed

services. Unfortunately, when as an O5 or O6 you are asked to take a job in the proverbial Timbuktu's of the world it might not be the right time for you and your family. You might be forced to choose early retirement because of your family situation. Think about this when you plan your career. It was not a problem for me because I'm a life-long bachelor. I doubt if there are many like me still out there today.

5. Foreign Area Officer duty is a fantastic experience. The overseas assignments in particular place you at a high level of policy determination and implementation. You work with the top levels of the host country armed forces – it's heady stuff. But you are also working in the proverbial goldfish bowl, where EVERYTHING you say and do is widely observed. It is important that you give this the attention it deserves. Be absolutely straight when it comes to the government's money, the alcohol that flows at social events, and the other temptations that might come your way. If you stray you WILL get caught, sooner or later.

6. Finally, both you and your family unit must be strong. Overseas assignments are not always comfortable, healthy, or enjoyable. There are stresses and temptations that can play heavily on you and your family. My advice here is simple: don't go if it won't work for you and your family.

7. Be professional in everything you do, and you will have a terrific time as a "full time FAO."

### **About the Author ...** JOHN B. HASEMAN, Colonel, US Army (retired)

Haseman entered the Army FAO program shortly after it was established. From 1974 through his retirement in January 1995 he "single tracked" as a FAO, with assignments on the Department of the Army Staff, professional service schools and language training (Indonesian, Thai, Burmese), security assistance, and the Defense Attaché System (DAS). He was inducted into the DIA Attache Hall of Fame in August 2011.

Haseman is a widely published writer as author and co-author of four books and numerous book chapters dealing with Thailand and Indonesia. More than 250 of his news and analytical articles on Southeast Asian political-military subjects have been published in such journals as Vietnam Magazine, Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter, Defence Review Asia, Asian Survey, Asian Affairs, Jane's Defence Weekly, Far Eastern Economic Review, and Joint Defense Quarterly. He is the author of the "National Security" chapter for the Library of Congress "white books" Indonesia: A Country Study and Thailand: A Country Study, and is the long-time author of the Indonesia and East Timor military and security sections for the Jane's Information Group Sentinel Country Risk Assessments.

Haseman further serves our community as a member of the FAOA Board of Governors.



## **Dual-Tracking of FAOs: Common Sense for a Complex World**

**By: Bill Spracher, US Army, FAO (48B) Retired**

This piece is written from the admittedly non-objective, perhaps a little outdated, perspective of an aging Latin America FAO who retired from the Army over a decade ago. The world has changed precipitously since I hung up my uniform, given the cataclysmic events of 9/11 and subsequent U.S. military involvement in places like Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Horn of Africa. The conflict environment is now more complex, and our adversaries more diffuse and less likely to follow any accepted norms of international behavior, much less the formal rules of war. This demands FAOs who are multifaceted, flexible, and attuned to both traditional and non-traditional military requirements. In short, multitiered dual-tracked FAOs are needed for the smaller, more agile armed forces of the future.

Some historical background and personal experience are in order. I entered the Army in 1970, commissioned Military Intelligence but detailed Armor. Although I enjoyed being a “treadhead” for three years in an AO where tanks and armored cavalry were king in those days—Germany, with the 4<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Divisions—I knew early on that I wanted to be a strategic intelligence officer and focus on a part of the world that has always gotten short shrift in attention and policy priority. I was adept with languages, interested in geography and history, and fascinated by international politics. I loved to travel, sample the cuisine and culture of new lands, and try to converse with people who talk and dress differently. In short, I was born to be a FAO, and as soon as permitted I volunteered for the program.

As a junior officer I grew up in the era of OPMS (Officer Personnel Management System), in which we were required to be proficient in our basic branch and, as soon as becoming “branch-qualified,” select an alternate specialty. While serving in my first MI assignment after the Armor stint, I volunteered to be a Latin America FAO. I was told by then-MILPERCEN (now HRC) that I would be “penciled in” as a potential LATAM or West European FAO, but that language training and the other pillars of professional development would have to wait until later. In the meantime, after company command and a couple of other intelligence jobs, I was sent to the Defense Intelligence School (now National Intelligence University, where I currently teach) in lieu of attending the MI Advanced Course, then went to graduate school for two years to study international

relations in preparation to teach at the U.S. Military Academy for three years, and finally attended Command and General Staff College. That was seven straight years “out of the mainstream,” and my FAO assignment officer assured me that was long enough without stretching that period out any more with specialized FAO training. While teaching at West Point in the Social Sciences Department, my billet was coded as a generalist FAO (non-area-specific), which I was advised did not count for much.

Cognizant of the fact I still wanted to be a full-fledged FAO, but sufficiently realistic to know I had to get back with troops, I volunteered to serve in the AO closest to real-world conflict at the time—Korea. After one year as S2 of the brigade manning the DMZ, I extended for another year so I could be XO of the MI battalion in the forward-deployed 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division. I fully intended to begin my FAO career by opting to go straight from Korea to another overseas tour, Panama, which is exactly what I got—a job as a branch chief, later division chief, in J2, U.S. Southern Command.

Ironically, while serving in Korea in challenging, high-stress positions, I and many other FAOs received letters from MILPERCEN demanding we “show cause” why we should be retained as FAOs, because apparently we had not done enough to demonstrate our devotion to holding that functional specialty. The letter said that the new general officer heading the FAO proponent shop felt there were too many “paper FAOs” and he intended to weed them out. I was somewhat incensed, as I had tried to obtain language training or the resident FAO course several years earlier but was told “Sorry, try again later.” I wrote a scathing response criticizing my handlers on how they were running the FAO program, and listed all my efforts at trying to become proficient in the region—no thanks to MILPERCEN—to include taking courses in graduate school keyed to LATAM, writing a master’s thesis at Leavenworth on the Inter-American Defense Board, and taking evening language courses on my own. I immediately enrolled in a short-lived FAO correspondence course, took the first of

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two modules, and then was informed there would be no second module because a new general officer had arrived and the policy had changed once again. I later left Korea hoping I could get to my new job at SOUTHCOM and become "immersed" in the region before being thrown out of the program for being a paper FAO. Much to my chagrin, I discovered that hardly any of the MI positions in J2 were coded as FAO, but I succeeded in getting the second of my two jobs during that tour—an O-5 billet as Chief of the Indications and Analysis Division, soon upgraded to a larger "center" (later to grow into an O-6-run "JIC," now called a "JIOC")—coded for a 35B/48B (Strategic Intelligence/LATAM FAO). I also started taking a Spanish refresher course available on-site and traveled widely throughout much of the region. MILPERCEN was happy to count that as my "in-country travel," a low-cost option indeed for growing a FAO.

From then on, essentially for the last 15 years of my 30-year career, I was safe as a LATAM FAO. In fact, for the bulk of that stretch the FAO ranks were so critically undermanned that my FAO assignment officer always had first dibs at me vice my MI detailer. I was fortunate to get just about every dream job I ever wanted as a FAO—a solid intelligence leadership position in a COCOM focused on my region of expertise, the senior LATAM analyst position in Army G2 (known as ODCSINT then), a battalion command at the U.S. Army School of the Americas, six months as a UNPKO contingent commander in another part of the world—northwest Africa—where my language and diplomacy skills came in handy, a year as a

student at the Inter-American Defense College, a tour as Army Attaché in a challenging South American country (Peru), an immediate follow-on tour as Defense Attaché in an even more difficult SOUTHAM nation (Colombia), both of which were designated by DIA as "critical threat" posts at the time, and a final assignment doing what I love most—teaching—at the National Defense University's Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies, mostly in Spanish. I had come full circle as a FAO, and by the time I retired in 2000 I could finally look myself in the mirror as a highly competent, fully-qualified FAO. As I like to boast, however, I achieved my goals mostly from pulling up my own bootstraps and resigning myself to the fact that the only training I was ever going to get was "OJT." I did not fully receive any of the four pillars of FAO training—language, FAO course, advanced civil schooling, or in-country travel—yet, I was able to succeed as a self-taught specialist. I became an O-6, which sadly a lot of FAOs do not, probably because I did not stay out of the mainstream even longer trying to scale those four pillars.

I half-jokingly tell people that I made it to COL, and spent over eight years at that rank, precisely because I straddled the fence between being a "half-baked FAO" and a "half-baked MI officer." I am convinced that, had I pursued either one of those paths vigorously in a single-tracked way, I would likely have fallen short of my goal. I wanted to be a FAO mainly because I longed to do military attaché work. Likewise, I know that, of all the branches, MI probably correlates most closely to FAO. Whereas some branches view one of their FAOs as being out of the mainstream while serving on a FAO tour—essentially lost to the basic branch during that period—MI and FAO usually go hand-in-glove. And whenever that did not seem to be the case, a bit of creative job position rewriting could bring them into alignment, as I had discovered at SOUTHCOM while immersed in the region.

I continue to consider myself a FAO to this day, as I was hired by a contract firm to be a LATAM subject matter expert on the NIU faculty. Although no longer wearing Army green or serving as a card-carrying FAO, I am fortunate to be able to do exactly what a FAO should be doing—teaching and mentoring young people from every service and from a broad array of Intelligence Community agencies on such intriguing subjects as area studies, international affairs, U.S. foreign policy, social analysis, collection management, and regional-focused intelligence activities. I get to work with foreign officers in the

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International Intelligence Fellows Program at NIU and the Combined Strategic Intelligence Training Program at JMITC (Joint Military Intelligence Training Center). I recently volunteered to assist with DIA's new Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture (LREC) program, one effort of which will be to familiarize and mentor students at the Joint Military Attaché School, which should be rewarding as I graduated from the first-ever iteration of JMAS in 1993 after it split away from the old Defense Intelligence College.

Among my duties at NIU is serving on master's thesis committees as chair or reader. About four years ago, I served on the committee of an Army officer who wrote about the utilization of FAOs after their first tour in that specialty, a topic specifically requested by a general officer in the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence. The author's argument was that recruitment, training, and tracking of FAOs for, and up until the end of, their first tours is closely orchestrated and monitored. Nevertheless, after they return to their basic branch there is less focus on re-obtaining them for second or follow-on tours. He felt the services needed to work harder on this aspect of career tracking, and I could not agree more. Perhaps that effort has improved in recent years; at least I hope so.

About midway through my 15 years as a uniformed, almost single-minded LATAM FAO, who still was trying also to do those things my branch told me were requisites for promotion and command/school selection, I heard some disturbing news. MI detailers were allegedly starting to advise bright young officers that if they wanted to rise in the ranks of MI and perhaps make general officer someday, they should avoid being enticed to become FAOs. In other words, the very people that FAO needs—smart young officers with regional interest and high language aptitude—were having their arms twisted to “go MI all the way” and to eschew the idea of becoming a FAO. I remarked at the time this was a travesty of a personnel policy, and I continue to feel that way today. An officer can be a solid contributor to both his/her basic branch and to a functional specialty like FAO.

For all the above reasons, I advocate strongly for a FAO dual-tracking system. FAOs do walk on water, and they can swim on both sides of the artificial barrier at the same time. True, it will be more difficult for them to make flag rank in their service's line branches or intelligence components, but most FAOs I have met are aware of that and are content with

their stations in life. They realize they are providing an invaluable service to their country as “strategic scouts,” and their skills are easily transferable to relevant jobs after retirement. True, they might be discriminated against on occasion by some branch assignment officer or promotion board member who does not have a solid understanding or appreciation for what FAOs do. However, the bulk of senior officers I have encountered nowadays fully realize what FAOs bring to the table, as virtually all the speakers we have heard at FAOA policy luncheons and annual banquets have reiterated.

By being dual-tracked, FAOs keep their feet in both camps and can more easily maintain the respect and admiration of senior officials. They are viewed as “one of us,” not some outlier with esoteric skills but no leadership capacity. Once they decide to single-track, though, they somewhat isolate themselves from the rank and file of their service and might even be viewed as “out of sight, out of mind.” I succeeded in the 20<sup>th</sup> century by being a dual-tracked FAO (and an extremely low-cost one at that!). I firmly believe that, with the even more complex challenges of asymmetric warfare in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, FAOs need to maintain their flexibility and dual competencies. If they do what it takes as more “generalist” officers to rise at least to O-6, we will have the benefit of their hanging around long enough to serve not only repeat FAO tours but maybe with some solid, satisfying, complementary branch assignments in between. Perhaps I am a dazed idealist, but one can hope.

### ***About the Author ...***

Colonel Bill Spracher (US Army, Retired) is a former 48B and a charter member of FAOA. He has been on the staff and faculty of the National Intelligence University in Washington for the last eight years. He holds a bachelor's degree from West Point, master's degrees in international relations (with a political science concentration) and political-military studies from Yale University and USACGSC, respectively, and a doctorate in higher education administration from George Washington University. In his spare time, he serves on the board of directors of the National Military Intelligence Association and has been editor of NMIA's American Intelligence Journal since 2009. He is also chair of the Washington Area Chapter of the International Association for Intelligence Education and serves on IAFIE's Educational Practices Committee.

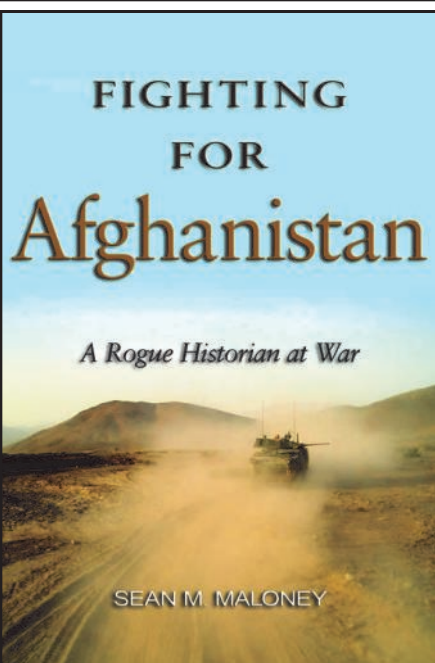
### Editor's Note:

Historically, the journal has been dependent on random submission from membership for the book reviews we seek to publish. Although those unplanned sources of professional reading and recommendations will remain valuable, we are all consistently receiving books recommendations which appear to be value-added. However, the volume of those recommended books easily outweigh my ability to read/write. Therefore FAOJ is creating this new "targeted reading list" wherein we can highlight book of interest with the request that some of you read these books, and then write book reviews/commentary for future publication in the journal.

### America: Our Next Chapter Tough Questions, Straight Answers By: Senator Chuck Hagel

We got to know Senator Hagel recently at both the Atlantic Council event (reported here in FAOJ) and at last month's Policy Luncheon where he was our guest speaker, and stayed behind at the Fort McNair Officer's Club to autograph books and chat with our membership. This is his most recent book so those of you at the luncheon purchased this book (the proceeds from which the Senator donated FAOA's new scholarship fund. I was impressed with Hagel and look forward to the book.

If you lookup the book online, you will find: "Senator Chuck Hagel has long been admired by his colleagues on both sides of the Senate floor for his honesty, integrity, and common-sense approach to the challenges of our times. The *Los Angeles Times* has praised his "bold positions on foreign policy and national security" and wondered, "What's not to like?" In *America: Our Next Chapter*, Nebraska-born Hagel offers a hard-hitting examination of the current state of our nation and provides substantial meaningful proposals that can guide America back onto the right path."



### Fighting For Afghanistan — A Rogue Historian at War By: Sean M .Maloney

This recommendation came from another member of the IC. The Amazon introduction is as follows:

"Sean Maloney, the first Canadian military historian to go into battle since the Korean War, brings the intensity of near-fatal experiences in southern Afghanistan to his description of events in 2006 when the Taliban insurgency threatened to overwhelm the U.S.-led coalition. He explains how the shift from small-scale guerilla attacks and urban terrorism to near-conventional warfare caught everyone by surprise and forced a small, under-equipped Canadian battle group into a desperate series of battles that ultimately saved Kandahar City. Maloney tells exactly what happened at all levels, from infantry company to battle group to brigade headquarters. He is the first to provide such details and give historical context, while helping readers understand the difficulties involved in complex coalition operations."

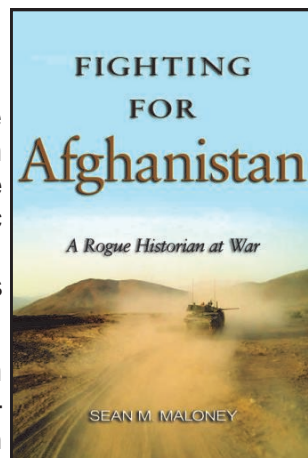


## The Strongest Tribe — War, Politics, and the Endgame in Iraq

By: Bing West

This book appears interesting and you might initially suspect it is dated: after all the US did withdraw “combat troops” from Iraq recently. There is no doubt that through assistance and security cooperation, the US-Iraqi relationship will very likely continue for many years, so perhaps it is not so dated. With chapter titles including The Islamic Caliphate, A Flawed Assessment, How to Create a Mess, and Contradictory Goals ... I still cannot wait to read it. The author is also Canadian, so a fresh set of 5-eyes is always interesting.

An online search reveals the following intro: “Sean Maloney, the first Canadian military historian to go into battle since the Korean War, brings the intensity of near-fatal experiences in southern Afghanistan to his description of events in 2006 when the Taliban insurgency threatened to overwhelm the U.S.-led coalition. He explains how the shift from small-scale guerilla attacks and urban terrorism to near-conventional warfare caught everyone by surprise and forced a small, under-equipped Canadian battle group into a desperate series of battles that ultimately saved Kandahar City. Maloney tells exactly what happened at all levels, from infantry company to battle group to brigade headquarters. He is the first to provide such details and give historical context, while helping readers understand the difficulties involved in complex coalition operations.



## Haunting Legacy

### Vietnam and the American Presidency from Ford to Obama

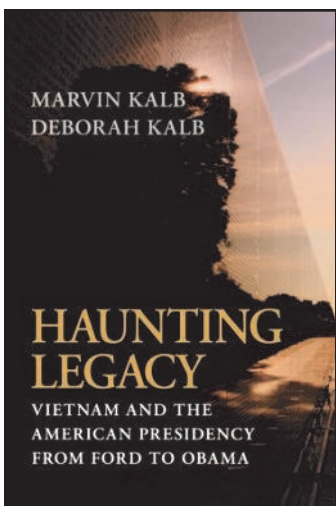
By: Marvin and Deborah Kalb

This book was recommended by a famed FAO who served throughout Vietnam and in whom I have learned to listen, so it has my attention.

"By God, we've kicked the Vietnam syndrome," crowed President George Bush when he repelled Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1991. He was wrong. The Vietnam debacle continues to haunt America's political leaders, military men, and population. Marvin Kalb and Deborah Kalb's account of this phenomenon is studiously researched, vividly narrated, and, above all, highly readable. It will stand as a major contribution to the subject." Stanley Karnow, author of *Vietnam: A History*, winner of the Pulitzer Prize. The US had never lost a war—that is, until 1975, when it was forced to flee Saigon in humiliation after losing to what Lyndon Johnson called a "raggedy-ass little fourth-rate country." The legacy of this first defeat has haunted

every president since, especially on the decision of whether to put "boots on the ground" and commit troops to war. In *Haunting Legacy*, Kalb presents a compelling, accessible, and hugely important history of presidential decision-making on one crucial issue: in light of the Vietnam debacle, under what circumstances should the United States go to war?

The sobering lesson of Vietnam is that the United States is not invincible—it can lose a war—and thus it must be more discriminating about the use of American power. Every president has faced the ghosts of Vietnam in his own way, though each has been wary of being sucked into another unpopular war. Ford (during the Mayaguez crisis) and both Bushes (Persian Gulf, Iraq, Afghanistan) deployed massive force, as if to say, "Vietnam, be damned." On the other hand, Carter, Clinton, and Reagan (to the surprise of many) acted with extreme caution, mindful of the Vietnam experience. Obama has also wrestled with the Vietnam legacy, using doses of American firepower in Libya while still engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan.



# Reference Article - The Delafield Commission

By: LTC ester Grau, US Army (Retired)

Letter By: CDR R. Mark Stacpoole

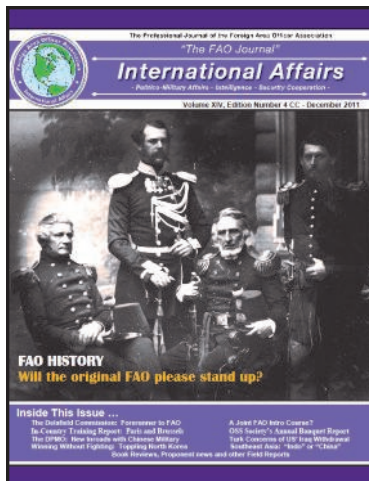
Sir,

I commend the writer on his article about the Delafield Commission but feel the need to raise one small issue. The article states that “Major Mordecai succumbed to diarrhea, which stopped his efforts and ended with his evacuation to a British field hospital in Balaklava, where he was tended by Florence Nightingale”. It is, alas, a frequent claim to have been tended by the “Lady of the Lamp”, but she spent the vast majority of her time in the hospital at Scutari (Anatolia), and was only in Crimea for short periods. The first was in May and June 1855 during which she contracted “Crimean Fever,” which very nearly killed Nightingale. The third and final period in Crimea was from March to July 1856.

It was on her second visit, in October 1855, when her

time in Crimea overlapped with Mordecai. She had returned not to nurse the patients but rather to continue a round of inspections that had been interrupted by her earlier illness. On this visit, she again fell ill and was again bedridden for much of her time. While it is certainly possible that she met Mordecai, she was in Balaclava on an administrative task and it seems unlikely that she would have “tended” any of the patients during this visit. Such a task, in all probability, being left to the nurses assigned to the field hospital.

Interestingly enough one of the more famous nurses (who spent much more time in Balaclava than did Nightingale) was Mary Seacole (daughter of a black Jamaican mother and a white Scottish father). Seacole ran a hotel in Balaclava that catered to officers, tourists and foreign dignitaries; she used the proceeds from this business to aid the wounded. It is very possible that Mordecai and the other commission members knew Seacole and conceivable that she tended him, thought this is pure speculation.



## Voice Your Views

The Journal strives to publish a variety of opinions, views, observations and analysis from tactical to strategic. We encourage you to express your voice by submitting articles, book reviews and Op-Ed pieces. Letters to the editor with both opposing and supporting the views of those expressed in published articles are encouraged. Submit your writings by either going to your association's website at [www.FAOA.org](http://www.FAOA.org) website, or via email.

[editor@faoa.org](mailto:editor@faoa.org)

The regular series articles of history argument for a prime over standing army with professional officer corps (Continental, Prussian and British Army) and the United States Military Academy (USMA) and a national training institution have been written by the author and the author's wife. The magazine was provided the material of the war for study. Between the date of 1852 and the date of 1853, the author has been writing over 100 items to study and other military information. Tips to France, Britain, and Prussia were the most common. "Napoleonic" Civil engineer, magazine and editorial officers. The opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not represent those of the US Army. The author has drawn directly on the work of Matthew Miller, but the conclusions are not necessarily those of Dr. Miller.



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James R. Clapper, Lt Gen, USAF (Retired)*

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