

THE JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

The Official Journal for the FAOs, International Relations Specialists,
and Partners associated with the FAOA Korea Chapter



Korea Chapter

FOREIGN AREA OFFICER ASSOCIATION



"Producing the premier leaders of the Republic of Korea-United States Alliance since 2020"

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A Message from the Senior Navy FAO

**Dear Joint Foreign Area Officers of the FAOA Korea Chapter,
Greetings from Moscow!**

Rarely has the job of a FAO on or near the Korean Peninsula been as challenging and multifaceted as it is today. This increasing complexity is something that I witnessed both as the U.S. Naval Attaché in Seoul from 2012 to 2015, and then as the J51 Northeast Asia Policy Division branch chief at U.S. Indo-Pacific Command from 2015 to 2018. The three Sea Services of the United States (Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard) have watched with alarm the growing naval power of the People's Republic of China and the increasingly aggressive behavior of the Russian Federation. Our actions in this decade will shape the maritime balance of power for the rest of this century. For this reason, I would encourage all FAOs, regardless of service, to take a look at the recently published Tri-Service Maritime Strategy *Advantage at Sea*, a strategy which places a high priority on expanding cooperation with allies and partners.

When I arrived in Russia last year, I was immediately struck by how many Korean brands I found in the local economy: the streets are full of Kia and Hyundai cars, a Lotte hotel sits near the U.S. Embassy, and Korean cosmetics feature prominently in every department store. My embassy colleagues also reminded me that over one thousand American businesses have ventures in the Russian Federation, to include Boeing, Ford, and Johnson & Johnson. This manifestation of the integrated global economy underscores one of the many commonalities I have always appreciated about the ROK-U.S. Alliance—the fact that we are an alliance of maritime nations, dependent on the free flow of commerce at sea for our security, and an alliance that enhances the prosperity of all around us.

In addition to assuming the duties of Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché in Russia, I also became the Senior Navy FAO and Community Sponsor of our 400-strong Navy FAO community. Let me take this opportunity to share with you my strategic narrative for the Navy FAO community, which is deeply informed by our maritime strategy.

Who We Are

Foreign Area Officers are the U.S. Navy's globally embedded strategic operators. Keeping the fight forward in today's increasingly complex global security environment requires persistent forward presence, and FAOs are an indispensable human element of the Navy's global posture. We do our work across all levels of the integrated fleet, the joint force, and the inter-agency as accredited naval diplomats, as the Navy's certified uniformed security cooperation professionals, and as the Navy's community of experts in regional political-military affairs, foreign languages, strategy, plans, and policy.



What Distinguishes the Navy FAO Community

The Navy recognizes that our network of allies and partners is nothing less than a strategic center of gravity, along with being one of our most enduring advantages over revisionist adversaries. These relationships yield assured global access and basing for the fleet, along with alignment, interoperability, and combined lethality for our fleet commanders and the joint force. FAOs are the Navy's only community of professionals who dedicate a career toward advancing objectives in this complex arena of international players. In his [guidance to the Fleet](#), Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Michael Gilday emphasized that "We must also succeed in sustained, day-to-day competition, winning future fights before they become kinetic." Much of great power competition occurs short of armed conflict and FAOs are on the front lines countering malign influences across geography and across domains. All of this requires regional expertise, local contact, and unity of effort among our worldwide network of maritime partnerships.

Our Proud Heritage

Alliances and partnerships have always been central to our nation's security, and emergent transnational threats make these relationships indispensable in any future fight. The Navy FAO community reached full operational capability in

2020, and we are the embodiment of our nation's powerful network of maritime partnerships, an enduring part of our naval heritage. Since the end of World War II, the United States—through shared commitments and sacrifices with our allies and partners—has built, led, and defended a rules-based international system that has benefitted all nations. Naval Officers conversant in foreign cultures, cognizant of foreign political-military developments, and fluent in foreign languages have historically been a critical ingredient in winning our nation's wars.

Our Culture of Resilience

Navy FAOs are found near every important maritime reach of the globe. We often do our job from remote but strategically important nodes. At times we live and work in non-permissive and oppressive environments. Multiple overseas postings in such settings require individual and family resilience, high states of readiness, iron-clad ethical behavior, and leadership skills well-suited to lead teams of high-impact inter-agency and multinational partners.

Soon it will be the month of May, when we typically observe Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month. Like the rest of the nation, I am approaching this year's AAPI Heritage Month with a heavy heart. The horrific and heartbreaking surge in violence and prejudice against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders across the United States took a horrific turn on March 16 with the shooting in Atlanta, Georgia, taking the lives of eight human beings, including six Asian women.

In times like these, we must speak out and counter the scapegoating that has befallen the AAPI community. We should be highlighting that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have made our nation more secure during the pandemic, with an estimated 2 million AAPI serving on the front lines as healthcare providers and first responders.

For those of us in uniform, we can pay tribute to a long, proud history of AAPI forerunners. Hidden figures of history such as trailblazer Susan Ahn Cuddy, a Korean American who overcame racial prejudice and sexism in 1942 to become the first

Asian American woman in the U.S. Navy and our first female gunnery officer, training fighter pilots how to shoot down enemy aircraft. Lieutenant Cuddy's contributions to our nation's security continued into the Cold War years when she led classified projects for naval intelligence and the National Security Agency.

As I mentioned in the beginning of my message, the complexity of issues at home and abroad defines us as modern-day Foreign Area Officers. When President Joe Biden delivered his first address to our nation's armed forces from the halls of the Pentagon, he emphasized that often, "our Armed Forces and the Department of Defense staff are how the rest of the world encounters America." His remarks praised the dedication and professionalism of military service members but also spoke to the important role of the military in the realm of international diplomacy—not only as the ultimate guarantor of our security, but as diplomats.

Fellow FAOs, be proud of the critically important work that you, with support from your families, perform for the nation!



Rear Admiral Phil Yu



Susan Ahn Cuddy with brothers Ralph (left) and Philip in 1942. Credit: Naval History & Heritage Command

Farewell from the President



Dear Members, Partners, and Leaders of the FAOA Korea Chapter,

The FAOA Korea Chapter has come a long way from its humble origins; and the best is yet to come.

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A special thanks to: Board Members, Editor in Chief, Assistant Editors, Associate Researchers, and Social Media Assistants.

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The servant leaders of the FAOA Korea Chapter are proud to serve the servant leaders of the future.

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It is time for me to move on. Expect the new leadership of the FAOA Korea Chapter to take the organization to greater heights!

Time flies. Less than a year after establishment of the FAOA Korea Chapter, it is already time for me to move on. As this is my last message to you, please allow me to share some thoughts and reflect on my tenure as President.

First, the FAOA Korea Chapter has come a long way and has a bright future. When I first discussed the idea of establishing the organization with colleagues and mentors, the main purpose for doing so was simply to legitimize small FAO gatherings and speaker events, which FAOs on the Korean peninsula used to organize on a regular basis. Today, armed with its own professional journal and a sophisticated network of luminaries and professionals, the FAOA Korea Chapter has the ability to foster key relationships and communicate ideas worldwide. Not bad, considering its humble origins. I strongly believe that this organization has unlimited potential and that the best is yet to come.

Second, I am grateful for the team effort. Developing the FAOA Korea Chapter has not been easy and has involved all the typical challenges associated with running a startup organization. Overcoming these challenges required creativity, collaboration, research, and a lot of teamwork. I want to thank the Board Members—Andrew, Wei, and Mike—for their willingness to stick by me through thick and thin. They performed their respective duties admirably and provided me with the constructive criticism I needed when it mattered most. I am also grateful for the collective efforts of all the staff members—from the Social Media Assistants who managed the organization’s social media pages to the Assistant Editors, Associate Researchers, and Editor in Chief who helped produce *The Joint Communiqué*. I am indebted to each and every one of you.

Briefly, I want to connect the actions taken by leaders of the FAOA Korea Chapter to the philosophy of servant leadership. I am a proponent of this philosophy, in which the goals of the leaders are to serve and put the needs of the organization’s members first. It is always an honor when leaders are able to do this effectively and impact lives in a positive way. The Board Members, staff, and I are proud to have built an organization that serves its membership through mentorship, education,

research, and connection. We have received positive feedback from members all over the world that what we are doing is incredibly beneficial not only for the FAO community but also for the servant leaders of tomorrow. Together, let’s continue to lead to serve—for now as well as the future.

It has been one of the greatest honors of my life to co-found this organization and serve as its first President, but now the timing is ripe for new leadership to take the organization to greater heights. Along with my departure, expect the election of a new President and Vice President, as well as a “reshuffle” in the Board Members, leadership, and staff. Regardless of who is elected and who joins the team, I am confident that the FAOA Korea Chapter will endure as an organization that develops and inspires its members to become the premier leaders of the Republic of Korea-United States Alliance.

I look forward to connecting with everyone from Washington D.C. Until then, farewell and godspeed.

Warm Regards,

Jacob Kim

A Message from the Editor

Dear Readers,

There is always much scrutiny of a U.S. president's first 100 days in office. How will he—and so far, it has always been a “he”—be different from his predecessor? Will he act on his election promises and make good progress on his long-term goals? Which world leaders will he confide in, befriend, and trust in an ever more complex world with shifting polarities?

At the end of April, President Joe Biden reached this milestone. Presumably, U.S. citizens have formed early opinions of him largely based on how he has tackled the urgent health and economic crises of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, while media abroad has focused on his pledges concerning climate change and his attempts at returning the reputation of the U.S. to the *status quo ante* as a predictable global leader.

For those interested in the ROK-U.S. Alliance, the most eagerly anticipated aspect of Biden's early tenure is the promised review of U.S. policy toward the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The President is faced with the unenviable task of choosing between ramping up pressure against Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un to compel him into immediately abandoning his nuclear weapons program, and negotiating long-term solutions that may deliver mutually beneficial economic and security outcomes. The policy review is expected to be finalized in the coming weeks. In the meantime, Kim Jong-un has already tried to force President Biden's hand by unveiling a submarine-launched ballistic missile that state media described as “the world's most powerful weapon” before firing what it called “a new-type tactical guided projectile” capable of carrying a nuclear warhead.

Regardless of whether the issue at hand is climate change, pandemics, economic growth, peace on the Korean Peninsula, or security in the Indo-Pacific region, both Presidents Biden and Moon Jae-in recognize that the People's Republic of China is an unavoidable factor to consider. How world leaders respond to the rising influence and confidence of the world's most populous country will be *the* defining issue of the decade, long after the coronavirus is resigned to a footnote.

Our two leading articles in this issue address this important topic head on. Michael Brodka examines what role the ROK



could play in an expanded Quadrilateral Security Dialogue and asks how its relations with the U.S., China, and other regional players could change as a result. Emily Stamp then turns her attention to Hong Kong and argues that pro-democracy protestors there deserve a more vocal ally in Seoul.

The FAOA Korea Chapter is dedicated to developing and inspiring leaders, and the remaining articles of this issue do just that. James Machado offers a useful overview of the Advanced Strategic Planning and Policy Program and Schuyler Webb concludes his two-part guide on mentorships. Wei Chou, Kongdam Oh Hassig, and Raphael Sadowitz then reflect on their time as a ROK-based military communicator, an avid young reader, and a U.S. Coast Guard Liaison, respectively.

Lastly, we are excited to release a limited print run of *The Joint Communiqué*, starting with this issue. For those lucky enough to receive hardcopies, **please refer to the digital version for hyperlinked sources.**

With best wishes,

Hedd Thomas

CONTRIBUTORS

Michael Brodka is an intelligence professional specializing in geopolitical affairs.

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Wei Chou is a U.S. Army Foreign Area Officer serving in the Combined Forces Command

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Kongdam Oh Hassig is an independent scholar and a former Senior Asia Specialist at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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James Machado is a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army and a doctoral student at UNC-Chapel Hill.

* * * * *

Raphael Sadowitz is the Coast Guard Liaison at the U.S. Embassy in Seoul.

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Emily Stamp is an English instructor with a background in International Conflict Studies

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Schuyler Webb is a behavioral scientist at J5 Communication Strategy, U.S. Forces Korea.

Gradations of Strategic Options

Assessing the Republic of Korea's Role in a Quad Plus Security Dialogue. *By Michael Brodka*

As great power competition with China continues, the United States has resolved to expand its regional, bilateral relationships into a broader networked Indo-Pacific security framework. The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (the Quad), an informal strategic forum between the U.S., Japan, Australia, and India, has emerged as a renewed priority for the Biden administration, which seeks to expand the forum to a Quad Plus that includes other regional partners such as the Republic of Korea (ROK). The ROK, however, has been reticent to join an expanded Quad and continues its strategic ambiguity to avoid antagonizing China. Although joining the Quad Plus framework provides enhanced security, supply chain diversification, and greater socio-cultural cooperation with other like-minded regional partners, a gradient membership is more beneficial for the ROK and its strategic interests in the region.

The Confluence of the Two Seas

In 2007, former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe noted that “the Pacific and the Indian Oceans are now bringing about a dynamic coupling as seas of freedom and of prosperity.” A Quad Plus has the potential to better leverage the mutual interests associated with this confluence of seas and explore the geopolitical complexities they harbor. The Quad is already committed to combined efforts such as COVID-19 vaccine distribution, supply chain diversification (particularly rare earth elements), emerging technologies, climate change response, and international law prioritization in the maritime domain. These commitments are a tall order, even for the Quad. It is not surprising, then, that its leaders published an invitation for “all of those who share in those goals” to assist. The Quad already partnered with New Zealand, Vietnam, and the ROK in response to COVID-19 in a Quad Plus forum, and leveraging these partnerships for other mutually beneficial efforts makes sense, as they would help shape strategic efforts within East Asia and the broader Indo-Pacific.

One such effort is the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP), a security concept first introduced by Japan and adapted by each of the Quad states. The FOIP seeks to provide freedom of navigation in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. That strategy is vitally important because the physical confluence of the two oceans, the Straits of Malacca, leads into the South China Sea (SCS). The SCS, an economic and strategically important geographic location, accounts for nearly one-third

of all global shipping traffic. The economic impact of unchecked Chinese encroachment and shipping constraints in the area could be catastrophic. For example, Dr. Lee Jaehyon, the Director of the Center for ASEAN and Oceania Studies at the Asan Institute, estimates that “approximately 86% of [the ROK’s] oil consumption is supplied by imports from the Middle East,” which travels through the SCS. The ROK, as a member of a Quad Plus dialogue, would directly benefit from international maritime law enforcement in the SCS to protect its shipping. However, the ROK must determine if partnering in the FOIP effort, like other Quad initiatives, is in its best interests given its relationship with China and other countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

What the Quad Plus Means for the ROK-U.S. Alliance

The ROK-U.S. Alliance is committed to ensuring peace on the Korean Peninsula. As such, the Quad Plus should not be seen as a forum to expand ROK military operations off the peninsula but should instead be used to enhance the ROK’s numerous bilateral security networks in the region. The Quad Plus would allow the ROK-U.S. Alliance to gain strategic advantages without blurring its objectives with outside military commitments. For instance, although Japan has a tenuous relationship with the ROK, it shares common security interests regarding North Korea and commerce through the SCS. Another example comes from a March announcement that the Quad plans to provide one billion COVID-19 vaccines by 2022, leveraging Indian manufacturing capacity, Australian distribution networks, and U.S. and Japanese financing. Likewise, the defense and energy sectors’ reliance on rare earth elements, crucial to numerous current and emerging technologies, is also a compelling reason for Quad Plus cooperation. With over 85 percent of the global supply of rare-earth elements originating from China, expanding business deals with companies in Australia and India, which have alternative sources for rare-earth element mining, refinement, and manufacturing, are essential to continuously supplying ROK-U.S. Alliance combined defense capabilities. Furthermore, expanding the ROK’s military hardware assistance to Southeast Asian countries is a way to expand maritime security cooperation in the SCS without risking Chinese backlash or degradation of ROK-U.S. Alliance military capabilities.

Despite the advantages of joining the Quad Plus as a member, the ROK has maintained strategic ambiguity

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for several compelling reasons. Dr. Kuyoun Chung, professor of political science at Kangwon National University, explained that “North Korea remains the core driver of South Korea’s foreign policy.” Therefore, Seoul must maintain amicable relations with Beijing, North Korea’s primary benefactor and potential partner in the ROK’s diplomatic efforts with Kim Jong-un. Moreover, the U.S. is a longstanding ally and the ROK’s primary partner in maintaining regional stability. To balance these competing interests, foreign policy autonomy as a middle power amid great power competition serves the ROK’s strategic goals better than joining the Quad Plus as a member. Former ROK Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha argued for strategic ambiguity when she stated that the ROK was reluctant to join “anything that automatically shuts out, and is exclusive of, the interests of others.”

Seoul should ensure its bilateral relationship with the U.S. remains strong to maximize its bargaining power in the ROK-U.S. Alliance and to maintain strong deterrence capabilities against North Korea. To accomplish this, a gradient membership in the Quad Plus in which Seoul participates in a limited capacity—but could scale according to its security needs—makes more sense than full membership. The ROK has already tried this with its participation in Quad Plus efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, proof that gradations in its membership could maximize security cooperation benefits without provoking China. Moreover, this flexible level of commitment would not require a retooling of foreign policy but can be acted upon within the many existing bilateral relationships with Quad Plus members.

How Will China Respond?

China has not turned a blind eye to the Quad’s activities or its

invitation to other East Asian partners. Liu Zongyi, a scholar at the Shanghai Institute for International Studies, argued that “although [the Quad Plus] claimed to be mainly aimed at dealing with COVID-19 issues, Beijing is suspicious of the expansion.” Beijing already communicated its unease with the Quad—coining it a “mini-NATO and U.S. containment strategy”—and its potential expansion to include Wellington, Seoul, and Hanoi. China has emphasized the need for “openness and inclusiveness” through multilateral cooperation for the benefit of all so as not to “undermine third parties’ interests.” This is ironic, given China’s unwillingness to cooperate with the very countries it alludes to in its messaging. Even worse, China’s belligerent behavior has further escalated tensions with these countries; it has aggravated territorial disputes with Japan, initiated a trade war with Australia, and engaged in a violent border dispute with India. These actions do not bode well for the ROK if it joined the Quad Plus as a member.

The ROK will not easily forget China’s economic retaliation following the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile defense system deployment in 2016. According to the ROK’s National Assembly Budget Office, this retaliation cost the ROK economy an estimated 7.5 trillion won (\$6.8 billion). As Seoul continues to repair its relationship with Beijing, Chinese state media cautioned the ROK on the potential consequences of joining the Quad Plus: “Joining the Quad will inevitably damage the just restored strategic mutual trust between China and South Korea.” According to Beijing, the Moon administration does not have much room for error and warns against choosing an anti-China side. However, Beijing has yet to respond to the Quad summit in any tangible way, instead choosing to “grandstand, [and]

Quad leaders meet virtually on March 12, 2021. From left to right: U.S. President Joe Biden, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison. Credit: U.S. Department of State





Republic of Korea President Moon Jae-in (center) meets with U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin (far left) and Secretary of State Antony Blinken (second from left) in Seoul on March 18, 2021. Credit: U.S. Department of State

focus on public theatrics and dramatics over substance.” From Beijing’s perspective, the Biden administration intends to deliver its promise to rebuild the “muscle of democratic alliances,” especially in the Indo-Pacific. It understands that Washington is serious about alliance assurances and will take a more active role than the previous administration. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken seemed to confirm that understanding when he proclaimed that “[the U.S.] will always stand up for our

principles for our people, and for our friends.”

The THAAD crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic revealed the ROK’s economic dependence on China, showing vulnerability to coercive economic statecraft and the need for diversification. President Moon Jae-in already began taking steps towards diversification when he launched his New Southern Policy in 2017 to boost ties with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) ten member countries and India. That policy, along with establishing supply chain alternatives and emerging technology initiatives with Quad Plus members—such as the Supply Chain Resilience Initiative—would help Seoul insulate itself from Chinese pressure in the future. The Quad Plus can help by providing the ROK-U.S. Alliance with additional partners and options to deal with economic security and ensure stability on the Korean Peninsula. As the Quad’s influence expands and the U.S. strengthens its alliances in the Indo-Pacific, China’s prospects for retaliation will decrease, providing the ROK gradient options for Quad Plus membership.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the FAOA, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. government.

Michael Brodka is an intelligence professional specializing in geopolitical affairs. He holds a Master of Professional Studies degree from George Washington University and is currently pursuing a Master of Professional Studies degree at Georgetown University. He is an Associate Researcher for the FAOA Korea Chapter.

“We will always stand up for our principles, for our people, and for our friends.”
—U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken

The Reluctant Role Model

Why Silence from Seoul is a Disservice to Democracy in Hong Kong and Beyond. *By Emily Stamp*

Some Hongkongers—defined hereafter as those who identify as being from Hong Kong—protesting Beijing’s increasing influence over the Special Administrative Region have cited the Republic of Korea (ROK) as an inspiration. They took inspiration from modern ROK history, movies showing the ROK’s democratization such as *1987: When the Day Comes* and *Taxi Driver*, and Korean protest music such as “March for the Beloved,” which has been sung by activists in Cantonese since 1984 and also recently in Korean. The ROK is known for its successful protests, and Koreans, particularly students, have had a long history of protesting, ranging from independence movements through the democratic uprising of the 1980’s and to the more recent protests against former President Park Geun-hye. More importantly, the ROK fought for its independence from Japanese colonization between 1919 and 1945, then won its democracy in 1987 after a protracted struggle against military dictatorships. Yet, the ROK is not utilizing its identity as a values-based modern democracy in its foreign policy; nor is it advocating for values based on freedom, as it should.

Since the introduction in 2019 of an internationally controversial National Security Law restricting civil liberties and permitting arrests of political dissenters, the upholding of Hong Kong’s freedoms, which the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration and Hong Kong’s Basic Law assures, seems further away. In March, the National People’s Congress of the People’s Republic of China unanimously voted to revise Hong Kong’s already pro-Beijing elect-

oral process. The move, welcomed by Chief Executive Carrie Lam and Pro-Beijing Hong Kong Lawmakers, will ensure that only “patriots” can run the city, effectively barring pro-democratic candidates through a pro-Beijing vetting panel. Lord Patten, the last governor of British Hong Kong, called it the “biggest step so far to obliterate Hong Kong’s freedoms and aspirations for greater democracy under the rule of law.” Hong Kong was granted a degree of self-autonomy and an independent legal system until 2047 under the “one country, two systems” arrangement. Yet, it seems as though China cannot wait, fully intent on deteriorating democracy and civic life. Beijing considers these steps as “internal affairs” in which foreign states are interfering.

Amidst multiple countries vocally disapproving of China’s increasing control over Hong Kong, the ROK and President Moon have been quiet despite Chinese media incorrectly quoting support. The ROK was not one of the 53 countries that signed a statement read before the UN Human Rights Council in support of Beijing’s imposition of the National Security Law, and it also did not sign the joint statement of 27 countries criticizing the action either. The ROK is stuck in a balancing act of strategic non-decision between its ally the U.S. and its largest trading partner, China. As such, it is expected to endorse neither’s position regarding Hong Kong, with which it has a close relationship. The ROK and Hong Kong are each other’s fifth and sixth largest trading partners, respectively, and maintain robust people-to-people exchanges through migration and tourism. It is in

the ROK’s interest that Hong Kong remains a stable international financial hub, with the foreign ministry having stated that it is important to Seoul that Hong Kong maintain its prosperity and development while enjoying “a high level of autonomy” under China. Nevertheless, given its history and commitment to independence, freedom, and democracy, the ROK should be advocating for Hong Kong and become the role model Hongkongers see it as, lest the ROK fall behind other regional powers in influence and commitment to its values.

If the ROK wants a larger voice on the international, or even regional, stage, it should start looking outward and prove itself as a democratic and human rights-based role model. The ROK is a modern success story, from its rapid economic growth to its successful fight for democracy and the protection of freedoms and rights. However, it limits itself in the international sphere due to its preoccupation with North Korea. Its aid to North Korean refugees falls under ethnic kinship as opposed to universal humanitarian principles that would include others. This narrowness has limited the ROK from framing itself as a country that upholds humanitarian rights and democratic values abroad. This is in contrast to other countries in the region openly showing solidarity towards Hong Kong at the political level such as Japan, one of the first to openly raise concerns with Chinese officials, and Taiwan, which created space for refugees from Hong Kong on humanitarian and values-based principles.

More importantly, Hong Kong, and the

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Above: A Hongkonger protests against a court order to keep 47 pro-democracy activists in custody on March 4, 2021. Credit: Studio Incendo.

Opposite: Pro-democracy protestors march in heavy rain down a road in Hong Kong on October 6, 2019. Credit: Studio Incendo.

identity of Hongkongers, also mirror Korea's strong spirit of independence. Many ROK citizens supported the protests in solidarity with Hong Kong, observing the overlap with Korea's own struggle for democracy. Furthermore, the 2014 and 2019 protests in Hong Kong primarily asked for the upholding of values and freedoms that citizens should have under the Basic Law. Only recently did some protestors ask for full democracy, with all Legislative Council members and the Chief executive being directly elected by voters. In an informal primary that could have contravened the National Security Law, over 600,000 people voted, demonstrating the will to uphold democratic processes. The National Security Law itself, with its ability to be applied on an ambiguous basis to many situations under its clauses covering the criminalization of subversion, sedition, terrorism and collusion, as well as China's revising of the electoral process, violates Hong Kong's Basic Law and the 1984 Sino-British Treaty. If the ROK professes to upholding liberal freedoms and values-based principles, it should speak out against this violation, proving itself an advocate for international order and law. Instead, the ROK has spent the last few years on a tightrope, balancing between pleasing both the U.S. and China. Both represent important national interests but the ROK will likely have to waver from its position of strategic ambiguity as pressure from either side increases.

The Chinese Ambassador to the ROK recently asked Seoul to respect Beijing's position that Hong Kong is an internal issue. Moreover, the ROK and China expanded their frontline military hotline channel to increase trust and ease tensions, and the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) issue of 2016 is beginning to thaw in regards to cultural and entertainment exchanges.[i] Due to its vulnerable economic reliance on Beijing, the ROK is thus unlikely to want to anger China

for fear of further economic punishment.

However, public anti-China sentiment is at a record high. This growth can be explained through controversies such as China's economic retaliation under THAAD estimated at a \$7.5 billion loss in 2017 alone, alleged 'cultural imperialism' with China claiming the Hanbok, Kimchi and figures of national importance, and its actions in Hong Kong and Xinjiang. A Pew Research Center study showed that 75% of Korean participants held an unfavorable view of China (up 12% from 63% in 2019) and 83% lacked trust in Chinese President Xi Jinping to do the right thing in international affairs. This suggests that the ROK's careful posturing towards China through foreign policy does not fully match public will and sentiment. As a model liberal society with democratic values, ignoring economic coercion should not be an option. The ROK should not compromise its values despite its economic reliance on China. If it chooses to endorse Beijing's actions in Hong Kong then, despite avoiding economic repercussions, it reduces the importance of its values.

President Biden is expected to maintain tough policies toward China, vowing to stand for democratic values and a rule-based international order, and he will ask his allies for support. Suggestions for the ROK to join the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) seem geared to counterbalance China. The ROK has not indicated a desire to join the informal strategic forum, seemingly out of a reluctance to jeopardize national and cooperative interests, yet it may find itself under increasing pressure to do so. Regardless of the ROK's final decision on joining the Quad, a lack of explicit support for a democratic, international order-based stance against China's flaunting of international law, will call its commitment to democracy and basic freedoms into question. China is

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breaching its signatory on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and also its commitment to autonomy and freedom of speech in the Sino-British Joint Declaration, registered at the United Nations as an International Treaty. Whilst supporting Hongkongers and their protests may not advance the aims of the protesters themselves, it would set ROK democratic and freedom-based values as a key national interest in foreign policy and could provide solidarity and further inspiration to other groups seeking democracy in Asia. Commonly, the U.S., European Union, Canada and United Kingdom are most vocal about their values (especially in response to China), and it would be beneficial to the ROK to be seen in such democratic and freedoms-based company when setting its foreign policy agenda.

For as long as the U.S. and China remain geopolitical rivals, the ROK will continuously face a choice between prioritizing economic security with China or military security with the U.S. The Korean maxim, “where two

whales collide, a shrimp gets a broken spine” is descriptively apt, and when given the choice to support the U.S., China or a balanced stance, 56.5% of Koreans agreed with Seoul’s balancing act.^[ii] Nevertheless, a values-based consistency would be better than the ROK choosing either country; or a foreign policy path based on strategic ambiguity; or case-by-case opportunism. The ROK should cultivate its identity as a modern democracy and choose values-based principles to advance on the international stage, upon which all its foreign policy can be based. In doing so it could speak out and advocate in solidary for countries and territories that have their freedoms and laws threatened. If the ROK were to always act on principles such as democracy or individual freedoms, as opposed to acting in response to rewards or threats from the competing U.S. and China, then it would be less liable to be criticized, show strength and would pave the way for values-based global leadership.

[i] Since the 2016 deployment of the U.S. THAAD missile defense system in

the ROK, which China stated could be used to spy on the mainland, Beijing has imposed economic punishments, including boycotting entertainment. No Korean movie was released in China, nor was any major music act invited to perform. It also banned tourist groups and regulators shut over 75 Lotte stores. Tourism slowly returned but only recently has the entertainment boycott thawed.

[ii] In a poll conducted by the Korea Society Opinion Institute on January 22, 2021, 1013 people were asked which relationship the ROK should prioritize given the prospect of a prolonged China-U.S. conflict. 56.5% responded that a balanced position should be taken; 38.6% responded that the ROK should prioritize its relationship with the U.S.; 2.2% responded that the ROK should prioritize its relationship with China; and 2.6% did not know or did not answer.

Emily Stamp is an English instructor. She holds an undergraduate Master of Arts degree from the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, and a Master of Arts degree in International Conflict Studies from King's College London. She is an Assistant Editor for the FAOA Korea Chapter.



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The Advanced Strategic Planning & Policy Program

What to Consider When Applying for the ASP3. *By James Machado*



Crest of the U.S. Army School of Advanced Military Studies

After serving several tours in the Republic of Korea (ROK) as a Foreign Area Officer (FAO), I noticed numerous significant strategic regional topics that never garnered long-term attention for research and in-depth examination. While much of the focus remained on North Korea, growing challenges ahead warranted further examination such as regional People's Republic of China influence, ROK-Japan relations, trilateral cooperation, and the reform and modernization efforts of our Allies. I noted our reliance on civilian institutions to do this research while generally limiting officers to 12-to-24-month master's degree programs that provide enough time to go a mile wide and an inch deep. I often wondered if the military had some type of longer-term research program that could offer the chance to dig deeper. In late 2018, I found such a program in a recently expired Military Personnel Message (MILPER). That message described a doctorate-producing (PhD) Army-funded program known as the Army's Advanced Strategic Planning and Policy Program (ASP3) managed through the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) and led to my application and selection into the 2020 cohort.

ASP3 is a multi-year program (normally three years) that prepares field-grade officers for service as strategic planners through a combination of practical experience, professional military education, and a PhD from a civilian university. The program aims to provide the Army with officers with advanced degrees who understand research methodologies, history, and strategic development, and can use these skills to benefit the Army upon completion of the degree. FAOs within this program generally complete the three years and return to a FAO assignment with a strategic focus, such as the Headquarters of the Department of the Army (HQDA), the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, a Combatant Command, an Army Service Component Command, or working in a Defense Attaché Service or Security Cooperation position. These positions vary by the needs of the Army as well as the relationship assignments have with the chosen field of study.

Using the annual ASP3 MILPER message (20-374 for cohort 2022), officers at the rank of major to lieutenant colonel apply to the program

in the spring by providing the required documents. These include a Graduate Record Examination (GRE) score within five years, 2-3 Letters of Recommendation (LORs), the ASP3 application and goals statement, Officer Record Brief, transcripts from past colleges, one or more writing samples, last five Officer Evaluation Records (OERs), and fitness test scorecard. Applications are then reviewed, and SAMS selects applicants for interviews, which are all done via video teleconferencing to ensure equality among applicants. An Order of Merit List (OML) is then slated and has to move through the chain of command to the highest levels of HQDA for final approval, which generally is released in the early fall of the year prior to beginning graduate school. Selected applicants, a cohort of approximately 11-14 members, then attend a two-day orientation to meet their cohort at Fort Leavenworth, discuss potential schools for application, and better understand the goals and challenges of completing the program on time.[i]

After orientation, officers apply to at least six doctoral programs at respected American universities in a liberal arts field of study related to strategy. ASP3 encourages applying to the highest ranked schools that have the best programs in their field of study. In the early summer prior to beginning these two years, the officer will Permanent Change of Status to the school and then attend a seven-week Temporary Duty professional military education seminar at SAMS at Fort Leavenworth to study history, strategic theory, and the practice of strategic planning.[i] Officers then spend up to two years

“*The School of Advanced Military Studies educates members of our Armed Forces, our Allies, and the Interagency at the graduate level to become agile and adaptive leaders who are critical and creative thinkers who produce viable options to solve operational and strategic problems.*”

—*Mission of the School of Advanced Military Studies*

in graduate school satisfying all course and exam requirements leading to acceptance as doctoral candidates before completing their degree in the third year.

The fields of study for ASP3 are wide and afford autonomy in selecting a focus. Many study political science, history, international relations, and strategic studies; however, options also include systems engineering, statistics, political economy, anthropology, and numerous other fields. However, there are limitations to choosing an academic focus: an officer must be able to finish in three years. While many programs meet this timeline, it is vital to inquire and confirm with each school.

Choosing to apply to this program requires applicants to consider several factors. First and foremost, this is an absolute commitment and families must be on board. With three years dedicated to attaining a PhD and the six-year Active-Duty Service Obligation (ADSO) upon graduation, family accord is a necessity for such a long-term decision.

Next, consider risks to career progression and goals. With the ADSO and three years with no OERs, officers of all branches assume risk for promotion. I was warned by senior FAOs extensively of this factor. To counter this risk, the expectation is that selected ASP3 candidates already display performance and potential through strong OERs. Those in the program are also expected to publish and network while in grad school to ensure they complete the program with a tangible reputation. With this reputation, ASP3 expects graduates to immediately enter a challenging high-profile position after graduation to further compensate for this risk.

With risk assumed and family support, officers then must consider the effort of the application to ASP3. The most difficult portions of the packet will likely be the GRE and LORs. Retaking the GRE means dedicated time to study and then test. To be competitive, candidates will want to exceed the minimum ASP3 requirements. LORs sound easy but are often not the hottest task for your letter writer. These require patience and persistence, not to mention strategic thought about who you want to write your LORs. While completing the application process, candidates should also begin contacting schools to float research ideas with faculty to determine the feasibility of specific topics and the standard timeline for completion of the degree. Schools that exceed the three-year timeline should still be considered options as those schools often adapt to military officers who can shorten this length through summer courses or overload as they will not be working as research or teaching assistants.

If blessed enough through luck, determination, and performance to enter ASP3, the next step is to apply to schools. During this phase, officers must consider faculty and each

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

university's culture. For the topic an officer chooses to study, it is vital to determine if each school has at least one professor in the chosen subject and who will work with the officer. For example, if an officer wants to study a specific country or issue, the officer must determine if the topics resonate with the faculty. Additionally, as faculty commonly switch schools or go on sabbatical, having secondary faculty members on the topic can alleviate potential challenges to the three-year timeline.

Before applying, it is advantageous to also consider arranging a phone or video call followed by a possible in-person visit. The discussions and potential visits will give you at least a sense of the department's culture, allow you to discuss academic plans, and meet potential advisors. One common misconception at this stage is that the Army will financially assist with the costs associated with the applications; this cost is incurred fully by the officer, but some schools do offer reduced or no-cost applications for military members. This reinforces the need to clarify that the school will support the three-year plan to avoid wasting money in application fees which range from \$50-150 each.

After acceptance to a school, working through the orders process, and attending the SAMS Summer Professional Military Education, selected candidates then become students at their respective universities. The program's weight then rests upon the individual officers – ASP3 places enormous trust in their efforts, focus, and discipline to complete this degree in three years. Each must work independently while focusing on coursework and research opportunities. Advisors and professors will not tell students what to research or how to do it; it is on the individual to determine a focus and devise a potential plan.

Once in school, family relations also

require a more delicate balance. Officers can seem to “be at home” more often and thus available for children and family activities, especially during COVID. This requires developing a battle rhythm that can temper those perceptions with realistic expectations and maintain a focus on PhD studies. My best practices in this aspect include establishing a home office, having meals as a family, communicating challenges with my spouse, and listening to my children to understand their perspectives.

As a student, another factor is age. ASP3 officers generally have 10-plus years on their peers and likely near the age of younger professors. While there may be a few veterans in each department, most students will have little depth on the military. Rank is often asked, but the understanding of a military occupation and order in the hierarchy is generally ambiguous. This presents an opportunity to share unique experiences and leadership pillars that can benefit fellow students and professors alike. Lastly, being older and interacting with professors requires deference—ASP3 officers do not have PhDs; professors do, and the officers want one. It is vital to understand the pecking order and be professional regardless of age.

Those in ASP3 should welcome the opportunity to positively affect the Army and Department of Defense (DoD). Specialized research can provide an influence on a particular topic and can carve a personal niche where few experts exist. Officers can bring this expertise back to the force to use in the strategic positions that FAOs hold throughout the world. An understanding of research, problem framing, and solution design and implementation set apart ASP3 graduates while giving the local command an advantage. This defines the point of ASP3—to provide the Army with strategic thinkers that have the academic experience to provide helpful insight

into the DoD's toughest challenge.

With everything discussed above, if you are interested in ASP3, my advice is simple: read the MILPER and determine your eligibility as well as Permanent Change of Station timeline. Make your intention known to Human Resources Command to ensure eligibility. If you choose to continue, begin by putting a packet together with the easy items you can download such as your Officer Record Brief, OERs, and past college transcripts. Take the next step on the GRE by scheduling a test followed by establishing a study plan. This requires you to pay to reserve your test, thus hopefully prompting you to move forward. The rest of the packet then becomes a step-by-step process with the important first step already taken.

To conclude, while this program entails significant work, you attain a PhD on the government's time, dollar, and with a normal paycheck. Ask yourself: what other opportunity matches this? If you are looking for a long-term commitment to truly expand ways to apply academia to defense efforts while broadening your own mind, read the MILPER and consider ASP3.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the FAOA, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. government.

[i] COVID-19 has required these courses to move online from June 2020 into 2021. However, it is expected that courses will return to in-person as COVID-19 restrictions ease.

James Machado is a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army. He has served as a Northeast Asia FAO as an intelligence analyst and speech writer in U.S. Forces Korea and as Assistant Army Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Seoul. He is currently a doctoral student in the UNC Hussman School of Journalism and Media.

Mentorships

Part II: A Developmental Tool for FAOs.

By Schuyler C. Webb

Why is mentoring so important in the military? Part I in this series on mentoring, which appeared in the last issue of *The Joint Communique*, introduced the art and practice of mentoring. In this article, mentoring examples and benefits for the mentors are discussed.

Dennis M. Drew, a retired Air Force Colonel and former Dean of the School of Advanced Studies at Air University, contends that mentoring at every level will be required to develop and prepare the next generation of military leaders.

As the military faces a future of uncertainties and unprecedented contingencies, such as competing strategic demands, vacillating societal support for the military and outright ignorance, the need for teaching, encouraging, and passing the torch will be great. From the junior noncommissioned officer to senior general officers, every leader is responsible for preparing the next generation of military leaders and should serve as mentors for their subordinates. In doing so, they demonstrate that the art and science of mentoring can change the world.

Mentoring has historically been a successful ingredient in the careers of leaders and professionals. In the military context, there is a story of successful mentorships. Consider the mentoring relationships between Casper Weinberger, Frank Carlucci, and Colin Powell. In 1971, while working as a Foreign Service officer, Carlucci "caught the eye of his chief,"

Casper Weinberger, who hired him to work on his staff. Weinberger was so impressed by his work ethic, he played a major role in Carlucci's appointment as President Reagan's national security advisor and, eventually, replacing him as Secretary of Defense. Correspondingly, in 1972, Colin Powell, a young, bright Army officer, was interviewed and hired by Carlucci as a White House Fellow. Because of that relationship, Powell became a rising star by serving as Carlucci's deputy on the National Security Council. Powell succeeded him as national security adviser to President Reagan. Upon his promotion to O-10, Powell became the youngest member to serve as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. All the people listed above benefitted from mentoring and were outstanding mentors and role models in their own right. The bottom line is that the great ones all had mentors. How does this apply to FAOs? These individuals are more fully integrated into the net-

works of influential decision-makers and are better able to promote the interests of newcomers.

Positive outcomes of the mentoring relationship are not only experienced by the mentee but by mentors as well. There is an array of benefits that include improved job performance, recognition by others, rewarding experiences, and a loyal base of support. Having a FAO mentee could be a source of pride for mentors, giving the mentor "bragging rights" when they succeed. FAO mentor relationships allow mentors to

“A mentor is someone who allows you to see the hope inside yourself.”
—Oprah Winfrey

have allies in the workplace or Area of Responsibility—allies that appreciate, respect, and value the mentor's knowledge, skills, and experience. Having a mentee could afford the mentor access to different sources of information. Since mentors and mentees are usually part of other social groups within their respective services, having a mentee may inspire



Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger speaks with Major General Colin Powell during Capitol Hill testimony in 1985.

new ideas, connect new contacts, or introduce new business strategies. Mentors—of higher rank and the same rank—may gain insight from the background and history of the mentees to use in the mentor’s own professional and personal development.

“Mentoring is a process that is good for all of us. It can open up communications within our service, break down barriers and foster cultural change.”

—General Ronald Fogleman, Air Force Chief of Staff (1994-97)

Mentors are often rewarded by having their perspectives (and worldviews) examined. For example, through helping others, a mentor gains personal satisfaction and fulfillment, respect of their capabilities as a teacher and advisor, and chances to review and reappraise the past by participating in a young FAO’s attempts to face the challenges of starting a career, academics, or entering a demanding billet. Moreover, they grow in their insight and are sometimes forced to articulate what they would have otherwise appreciated. FAO mentors are in a position where they can appreciate their accumulated wisdom from the past.

Mentors may perceive themselves as “winning the game.” However, as most appreciated mentors know, they no longer win the game by having the smartest coworkers. They win by selecting and hiring, and at the same time, become more mentee-centric in their leadership style. Learning how to grow individual and collective competencies requires mentors to teach mentees the value of building work relationships to enhance trust and values that complement the FAO team’s strengths. This effort will help to improve mentee weaknesses and fortify strengths. In addition, this strategy helps foster innovative thinking

and problem-solving skills among mentees. For FAO mentors, this process sustains lifetime learning and knowledge sharing as a mentoring experience tactic.

The wisest FAO mentors realize that one size does not fit all mentees and that they are not the lone Super Mentor. They recognize that FAO mentees from the moment they wear the uniform for the first time require a Justice League of Mentors to ensure their success as junior FAOs. The wise mentor knows that throughout their career, when the young FAO is ready, a mentor will appear.

Mentoring also realizes dividends—i.e. return on investment—since retaining a FAO is good business. In most cases, mentees take away a sense of indebtedness to their career in general and their mentor in particular. As junior FAOs are trusted with more responsibility, they will transfer the mentoring experience to subordinates in the same manner they were mentored. They will not forget their mentors when opportunities or new information become available—consultancies, keynote speaker engagements, nominations for awards, and professional recognition.

Finally, FAO mentoring actions may provide an impetus for reflecting on their goals and performance, reviewing their progress, and refocusing their objectives with their commands. Moreover, mentoring will facilitate improved communication, motivation, coaching counseling skills, and other leadership and management skills.

Final Thoughts

Parts I and II of these mentoring articles were intended to be a Mentoring 101 introductory course and a

friendly reminder of the potential and realization of mentoring concepts and action.

Finally, the services must find ways to highlight and reinforce mentoring to be perceived as a crucial and valued leader activity. Such reinforcement should include ongoing attention to mentorship in communications from top leaders, commanders, and forward-deployed officers. Mentoring activities and strategies might incorporate FAO mentoring awards and the development of special designations (e.g., “master mentor” or “mentor of the year”) to recognize specialized training and exceptional performance in this role. This effort and others like it would enhance the FAO community and elevate it to the next level.

Many SMEs/pundits posit that the 21st century will be defined by what happens in Asia. It is the source of incredible economic growth and tremendous upward potential, but is also riven with uncertainty, tension, and competition. Indeed, FAOs’ skill sets, tempered by mentoring, will play an ever-increasing role in maintaining the balance, peace, and mutual understanding in this militarily and politically-charged region.

Schuyler “Sky” C. Webb, PhD is a behavioral scientist at J5 Communication Strategy, U.S. Forces Korea. He is the co-author and editor of several books, including *Selected Aspects of Mentoring and Managing Diversity in the Military*.

“Tell me and I forget; teach me and I may remember; involve me and I learn.”
—Benjamin Franklin

Striking a Chord

Confessions and Reflections of an Amateur Military Communicator. *By Wei C. Chou*

Imagine an orchestra. Do you hear the melodic serenades of the strings, a rousing *accelerando* of the brass, and the rhythmic framing of percussion playing together in perfect harmony? Now imagine an electric guitar entering the amphitheater, wailing a heavy metal riff. We will come back to this image.

When I first arrived in the Republic of Korea (ROK) and was told I would be working in communications strategy, my initial thought was, “What is communication strategy? This is not supposed to be FAO work. Where is the doctrine for this?” However, what I came to discover was a truly illuminating experience in a cross-disciplinary field that changed the way I came to view the ubiquitous “information” realm that reaches across the DIME (diplomacy, information, military, and economics) and permeates the five domains of warfare. One need look no further than the media that competes for our daily attention than to see the power a coherent narrative can bring. A simple message can stir a people to affect great change, galvanize groups to action, or drive a nation to upheaval. In the absence of kinetic encounters, the information domain is where competition

for dominance is happening all of the time.

Let us return to our ill-fated orchestra. How much more effective was the orchestra in communicating its music when the instruments were all in sync versus when the electric guitar appeared on stage? Similarly, imagine your geographic combatant command. Much like the instruments of the orchestra, a joint force or a service component contains many subordinate and enabling commands, each boasting unique sets of capabilities and audiences. Communication strategy (CS; formerly known as strategic communications) should serve as the conductor between this diverse body of communicators, guiding and coordinating the message and its delivery.

CS is a nascent but growing field in the U.S. Department of Defense and the militaries of our allies and partners abroad. It is still amorphous in both its usage in application. In addition to my own CS experiences with United Nations Command / Combined Forces Command / United States Forces Korea and counterpart ROK organizations, CS staff elements have stood up at U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, and the NATO Strategic Communications Center of Excellence, to name a few.

Given the crucial cultural aspects interwoven in communications in general, I will certainly not be the last FAO or non-specialty officer to work in this field. Nor should I be one of the exceptions of FAOs involved in CS given the relevance of the information domain and the diversity of thought and backgrounds necessary for a strong communications team. Therefore, for the other officers also stepping into this field for the first time or those that are just hungry for knowledge, I offer a short list of guiding reflections gleaned from my brief experience:

1. Essential elements of communication always apply.

As the late former CEO of Chrysler, Lee Iacocca, famously said: “You can have brilliant ideas, but if you can’t get them across, your ideas won’t get you anywhere.” As in everyday communication, effective communicators must always consider the fundamentals of communication, including not only how a message is crafted, but also its intended audiences, its messengers, and the timing and method of its delivery. Imagine a simple example we have all experienced:



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asking for leave. Your superior would be more inclined to grant it if tied to family or professional reasons. Additionally, perhaps an intermediate supervisor that everyone likes bringing it up when your approving superior is having an excellent day after a tropical vacation would make all but guaranteed. In a ROK context, an air demonstration may inspire support during the Turn Toward Busan commemoration of UN Sending States or prove disastrous when coinciding with the anniversary of the Nogeun-ri Massacre.[i]

Each of these elements of communication become especially palpable in a multinational environment and, when carefully considered, each can be the difference between a message being influential or inconsequential.

2. Make it digestible.

No matter how nutritious a food item is, people will not eat it if they do not like it. Individuals have a limited capacity of attention they can allocate to messages they receive throughout the day while CS specialists at countless organizations are constantly competing and marketing for every second of human attention. This is especially relevant in today's highly interconnected information environment where target audiences are unceasingly bombarded with the most appealing and addictive content. Therefore, your message must not only reach your audience but be something they want to or are willing to consume.

3. Know where the spotlight is.

If you know where the spotlight is in the information environment—what is “trending”—operating within its scope will more widely communicate your message. However, misjudging the context while the spotlight is upon you may keep it on you for undesired reasons. Service members and FAOs are spread to the far reaches of the globe. A conflict, flashpoint, of high-level diplomatic row consistently has the chance to seize the spotlight and cast it upon you. In this case, be prepared to command it lest it veer naturally to where there is most activity or controversy.

4. Clearly identify desired effects.

Winston Churchill's famous “We Shall Fight on the Beaches” speech at the House of Commons in 1940 stirred the British to fight during World War II and was described by one MP as “worth 1,000 guns, and the speeches of 1,000 years.”[ii] As you craft your messaging, know what ends and effects you seek. As members of the Department of Defense, our role is typically to inform or educate, so information should be presented in a clear, non-biased way that addresses the concerns of the audience. However, to influence or inspire action more often than not calls for a greater appeal to perceived emotions or obligations. The latter situation may rarely be required during times of peace but should nonetheless be considered carefully due to the range of situations we face.



Prime Minister Winston Churchill speaking in the House of Commons of Canada, Ottawa, on December 30, 1941. Credit: Library and Archives Canada

Opposite: Silhouettes of Gustav Mahler, by Otto Böhler

5. Engage or be isolated.

If you do not influence the narrative, it will build and surround you. Silence is a message in and of itself. Army field manuals instruct that even when executing defensive operations, active reconnaissance is crucial in preventing the enemy from exerting his will across the battlespace. Likewise, if a prominent issue arises that involves your organization, silence will ensure that external sources shape the narrative while the command is left to react. Conversely, the attention spans of the news and social media cycles can be short. Silence can be employed strategically to reduce the degree of attention an issue receives and may hasten the eye of the media shifting to its next target.

6. Be prepared to “message up.”

Dominance in the information environment is a fickle thing, often swung rapidly by displays of the extreme or by well-known personalities and authorities. Your higher command values bottom-up feedback—always be ready to provide it and add that additional layer of cultural, on-the-ground nuance when executing a strategic message. Your commander, the senior leaders in higher-tiered organizations, and civilian counterpart organizations will often have greater ability to amplify messaging or seize that scarce resource known as human attention.

7. Know your context.

The Mission Analysis step in the Military Decision-Making Process (and its joint counterpart, the Joint Planning Process) shapes the entire direction of the staff's planning efforts. Just as a military planner must know the operational environment, a communicator must know the information environment. This goes beyond knowing what is being shown in the news. Know the biases and agenda that each media carries, the narratives that leaders and journalists are seeking to advance, and the historical and cultural contexts of the issues. Technology and data also enable us to know exactly what is being viewed, trends in

“You can have brilliant ideas, but if you can’t get them across, your ideas won’t get you anywhere.”
—Lee Iacocca

coverage, keyword associations, and much more. These are your new weapon systems. Learn to use them well.

If a ballistic missile were to fly toward the continental U.S., layer upon layer of defensive infrastructure across multiple domains would activate to prevent it from completing its journey. In the information domain, these layers are not as clear. The communicator can step into the pitfall of thinking he or she is alone in combating an adversarial narrative or dis-/misinformation. This is not the case. Anyone can be a messenger, and when it comes to communicating strength to our adversaries or solidarity to our allies, a multitude of

resources and avenues can be at your disposal, guided by a coherent CS and limited only by the communicator’s capability and creativity.

After all, a skilled conductor can even weave in electric guitars.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the FAOA, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. government.

[i] Turn Toward Busan is an annual event commemorating the contributions of UN Sending States to the Korean War, which primarily flowed through Busan; the Nogeun-ri massacre occurred during the Korean War when U.S. forces fired upon and killed a group of South Korean refugees.

[ii] Martin Gilbert, *Churchill: A Life* (London: Pimlico, 2000), 656.

Wei C. Chou is a U.S. Army Northeast Asia FAO serving as the Deputy Chief of Communications Strategy for the Combined Forces Command. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the United States Military Academy and a Master of Arts from the University of Hawaii. He is the Treasurer of the FAOA Korea Chapter.



The author reading her own poem during a Night of Literature event at her high school in 1965.

When Less Was More

Memories of Reading in Korea.

By Kongdam Oh Hassig

Today, we live in an environment absolutely filled with information of one sort or another, a world where Google provides an answer to almost any question. When I was growing up in Korea in the 1950s and 1960s, if we needed an answer we went to our teachers, the school library, and, if we had one, to the encyclopedia at home. Those of us who were fortunate enough to have educated parents could ask them as well.

Books were the best source of answers to questions that stumped our teachers and parents, but in dirt-poor Korea books were expensive, and school and public library collections were sparse. My father was a teacher and an avid

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reader, so he brought home books from his school library. He also had a good personal collection in his study room. As soon as I learned how to read Korean, I began to tackle his books. He also had a small number of English books and quite a few books in Japanese and classical Chinese. As a child, I learned the first 1,000 Chinese characters, but my English lessons did not begin until middle school, and I did not learn Japanese until graduate school.

After moving up from Busan, I attended a Catholic girls' middle school and high school next to the Myeongdong Cathedral in downtown Seoul. Although Korea has long been famous for the pressure that parents put on their children to get good grades, my school's academic level was not particularly high because most of the girls dreamed of being fashion models, singers, artists, ballet dancers, or movie stars; and none of these occupations seemed to call for academic excellence. Our school library was good compared to the libraries of most Korean public schools, thanks to our head librarian, a French nun. I used the library frequently, and the nun set aside a special table for me with a bright reading lamp. A few years later, I was fortunate in my choice of college, which was an American Jesuit University in Seoul that boasted one of the best foreign-language libraries in any Korean university.

The American Cultural Center in Seoul, within walking distance of my schools, played a special role in my education. The bookshelves in its reading room were filled with recent editions of magazines and journals, and more importantly, they were uncut. In those days, censors cut out articles in foreign publications that were critical of the Korean government. To get the full picture, I had to visit the American center to read the entire article.

Of course, compared to North Koreans, we South Koreans were fortunate. In North Korea, even today, the government does not cut out critical foreign articles. Instead, the authorities have instituted an almost total ban on foreign publications. Only college students who are in special courses to prepare them to be diplomats or technical specialists can gain access to foreign publications, which they have to sign out with special permission. In ordinary North Korean schools, textbooks are still in short supply and poor condition, forcing North Korean students to share textbooks with each other.

Today, South Koreans live in a whole new world. Korea has good public libraries. Bookstores and "book cafés" are everywhere. Art museums offer wonderful exhibitions of foreign and domestic paintings and sculptures. Documentary films can be watched on television and on the Internet. And speaking of the Internet, the Republic of Korea is famous for being one of the best-connected societies in the world.

Yet, the irony is that many bright students fail miserably on their Korean language exam when they apply to college. They do well in math and science, and they are proficient in English; but they speak broken Korean. It is painful for me, coming from the old school, to read articles written by young journalists who seem never to have learned proper grammar and spelling. But this is not the worst of it, and perhaps this is only a criticism made by members of the older generation, who are reluctant to recognize language changes are sometimes for the better and sometimes for the worse. To understand the world, one must acquire an accurate view of it—in breadth and depth. The Republic of Korea's extensive internet and Wi-Fi connectivity has made it possible for people, young and old (but especially young), to get easy answers to any question—not necessarily good answers, but easy ones. Of course, this is not a problem that exists only in Korea.

The popularity of factoids, digital images without context, and memes—those strangle cultural creatures that seem to exist independently of the objective world and yet pretend to reflect it—has replaced the search for solidly-researched answers. Memes and such are easy to understand and fun to share, but they tend to highlight exceptions and anomalies rather than depict the world we actually live in.

Gustave Flaubert once said, "Do not read, as children do, to amuse yourself, or like the ambitious for the purpose of instruction. No, read in order to live." For diplomats and politicians, President Truman offered this advice: "Not all readers are leaders, but all leaders are readers." Or at least they should be. Reading is a serious business, requiring concentration and time, which more often than not seem to be in short supply. But if the citizens and leaders of a nation are to avoid the curses of narrow-mindedness and isolation, they have no choice but to read.

Kongdan "Katy" Oh Hassig, Ph.D. is an independent scholar. She was a Senior Asia Specialist at the Institute for Defense Analyses for over 20 years. She has written and spoken on a wide variety of topics in East Asian studies. She is a Distinguished Member of the FAOA Korea Chapter.



WELCOME TO KOREA COAST GUARD

H.E. Harry Harris U.S. Ambassador to Korea



Oct. 13th, 2020



The author (second from right) and Harry B. Harris Jr., former U.S. Ambassador to the ROK (third from right) visit the headquarters of the Korea Coast Guard, Incheon, on October 13, 2020.

Between Lethality & Diplomacy

Representing the U.S. Coast Guard in Korea.
By Raphael Sadowitz

“Are you in the military?” “Are you part of the Navy?” These are typical questions that U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) service members encounter throughout their careers. When I first moved to Seoul, I was surprised to have on-base military hospital staff question if my wife and I were eligible for TRICARE.^[i] To clarify, as per [Title 14 of the U.S. Code](#), the Coast Guard “shall be a military service and a branch of the armed forces of the United States at all times.” Although it operates under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the USCG is one of the six coequal military service

branches. Its service members are subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice and receive the same pay, medical, benefits, and allowances as those serving in one of the other five branches. What sets the USCG apart is that it is the only branch of the U.S. military with both the authority and capability to enforce national and international law on the high seas, outer continental shelf, and inboard from the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone to inland waters.

As the lone USCG representative in the Republic of Korea (ROK), I am assigned at the U.S. Embassy in Seoul as the Coast Guard Liaison. I work under the DHS umbrella within the embassy alongside officials from other DHS entities, including U.S. Customs and Border Protection and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The USCG’s unique mission offers opportunities for access to and engagement with various ROK governmental and civilian entities. Typically, I am liaising with such ROK institut-

ions as the Korea Coast Guard and Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries, as well as numerous commercial sectors in the maritime industry. By virtue of being a branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, I also engage regularly with fellow service members from U.S. Forces Korea and U.S. Naval Forces Korea for USCG engagements in annual exercises and cutter deployments.

Vice Admiral Linda Fagan, USCG Pacific Area Commander, [said](#) in her keynote speech at last month’s Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association TechNet Indo-Pacific Conference, that “the U.S. Coast Guard sits between the lethality of the Department of Defense and the diplomacy of the Department of State.” From my perspective as the sole USCG representative in the ROK, I think that is exactly right. Recently, I accompanied a group of USCG marine inspectors to the Hyundai Heavy Industries shipyard in Ulsan—the largest shipyard in the world—for a federal inspection of a \$1 billion floating oil platform being built for a U.S. oil company. Currently, I am helping to coordinate the annual North Pacific Coast Guard Forum, a

REFLECTIONS

multilateral platform that provides a rare opportunity for its members—Canada, the People’s Republic of China (PRC), Japan, the ROK, Russia and the U.S.—to discuss and coordinate maritime matters related to combined operations, drug trafficking, fisheries enforcement, and illegal migration. It is through this forum and my experience working in the ROK that I realized that the USCG is truly a multi-mission agency with a wider range of authorities than any other maritime agency in the world. From defense readiness to law enforcement to marine safety, our sheer variety of operations place us in a unique position and enable us to become an avenue for access and outreach within the international realm.

As part of an effort to increase our footprint, the overseas presence of the USCG is growing, especially in the Indo-Pacific region. In his 2021 State of the Coast Guard Address, Admiral Karl Schultz, Commandant of the USCG, [explained](#) that this includes “doubling-down on operations and engagements with like-minded island nations and Quadrilateral Security Dialogue partners” in addition to the delivery of three new Sentinel-class Fast Response Cutters “with terrific expeditionary capabilities” to be homeported in Apra Harbor, Guam.

Those will help to combat the threat of illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing in the region. Meanwhile, the USCG regularly deploys Legend-class National Security Cutters alongside the U.S. Seventh Fleet on Freedom of Navigation Operations around the region. All these operations are staffed through our workforce assigned throughout the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command and U.S. Embassies in the Western Pacific. These include officers serving as Attachés, Liaisons, and in other roles in Security Cooperation Offices in the ROK, Japan, the PRC, the Philippines, Vietnam, Singapore, Fiji, and Australia through the International Affairs Program, which is the USCG’s answer to the Department of Defense (DoD) Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Program.[ii]

FAOs assigned to the U.S. Southern Command may have had a better understanding of USCG missions, as the region has historically seen the Coast Guard regularly conducting search and rescue, counternarcotics, and migrant operations. Now, USCG presence in the Indo-Pacific is growing and therefore it is vital for FAOs and other DoD entities to understand our capabilities and utilize the benefits that our organization may bring for international diplomacy and engagements. If nothing else, it could help my

successors access their TRICARE benefits without any issues! It has been a pleasure working with FAOs throughout my time in the ROK and I look forward to collaborating on many more USCG engagements to come.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the FAOA, the Department of Defense, the U.S. Coast Guard, or the U.S. government.

[i] TRICARE is the healthcare program for serving and retired military personnel and their families.

[ii] There is an initiative and need within the USCG to create a consolidated FAO program equivalent to the DoD’s but currently, duties as globally embedded strategic operators are spread amongst various specialties within the USCG. Typically, these assignments include Defense Attaché Service, Security Cooperation Enterprise, Combatant Command, Joint Task Force, USCG International Port Security Programs and at U.S. Embassies worldwide.

Raphael Sadowitz is a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Coast Guard and is the Coast Guard Liaison at the U.S. Embassy in Seoul. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy and a Master of Science degree from Boise State University.

“Our Fast Response Cutters have proven to be extremely capable and are making major contributions wherever they operate.”

—Admiral Karl L. Schultz, Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard
State of the Coast Guard Address, March 11, 2021



Partners

The FAOA Korea Chapter would like to thank the following organizations for their generous support:



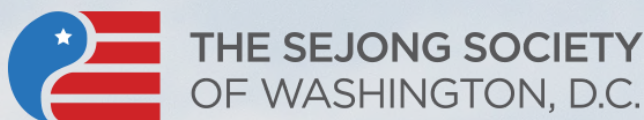
The **Korea-United States Alliance Foundation** is an organization committed to promoting the ROK-U.S. Alliance and the contribution of the United States Forces Korea to security and peace on the Korean Peninsula. The Foundation exists to financially support the management and operations of the Korea Defense Veterans Association; to strengthen the ROK-U.S. Alliance through programs that facilitate education, discussion and research on the Alliance; and to promote the honor and welfare of both countries' armed forces personnel and their families.



The **United States Embassy Association** is a private, non-government, non-appropriated employee organization, established under the rules of the U.S. Department of State for the benefit of its members. It provides activities, facilities, programs, personal services, and lodging in order to bring a little bit of America and community spirit to the lives of employees assigned abroad.



The **Center for Future Defense Technology and Entrepreneurship** stands at the forefront of the global defense innovation ecosystem. As the only defense innovation hub in South Korea, we aim to advance the global defense innovation ecosystem through events, publications, strategic network partners, and in-house experts and advisors.



The **Sejong Society** is a non-partisan, and all-volunteer tax-exempt organization dedicated to informing, developing, and connecting young professionals interested and engaged in U.S.-Korea affairs. Our ultimate goal is to inspire the next generation, regardless of political and career affiliations, of Korea and Northeast Asia specialists.

Calendar of Events

May 2021

- Wednesday 5th:** Children's Day (ROK)
- Thursday 6th:** KDVA Wellness Webinar *Partner Event*
- Friday 7th:** Military Spouse Appreciation Day (U.S.)
- Saturday 8th:** FAOA Korea Chapter Dinner
- Tuesday 11th:** SECDEF/CJCS SASC Joint Posture Hearing
- Wednesday 12:** SECDEF/CJCS HASC Joint Posture Hearing
- Wednesday 12th-Thursday 13th:** ROK-U.S. Korea Integrated Defense Dialogue
- Thursday 13th:** Children of Fallen Patriots Day (U.S.)
- Saturday 15th:** Armed Forces Day (U.S.)
- Tuesday 18th:** 2ID Change of Command
- Wednesday 19th:** Buddha's Birthday (ROK)
- Monday 31st:** Memorial Day (U.S.)
- TBD:** Biden-Moon Summit

June 2021

- Friday 4th:** KUSAF Wreath-Laying at Seoul National Cemetery *Partner Event*
- Friday 4th-Saturday 5th:** Shangri-La Defense Dialogue, Singapore
- Friday 4th-Saturday 5th:** Trilateral Ministerial Meeting, Singapore
- Sunday 6th:** Memorial Day (ROK)
- Monday 14th:** U.S. Army 246th Birthday
- Friday 25th:** Korean War 71st Anniversary

July 2021

- Thursday 1st:** U.S. Forces Korea 64th Anniversary
- Sunday 4th:** Independence Day (U.S.)
- Friday 9th:** 10th ROK-U.S. Alliance Forum *Partner Event*
- Saturday 17th:** Constitution Day (ROK)
- Saturday 24th:** United Nations Command 71st Birthday
- Tuesday 27th:** UN Forces / Armistice Day (ROK)

Background image: A member of the ROK Air Force's High-Altitude Low-Opening Parachute Team rehearses for the 2019 Air Power Day at Osan Air Base, ROK. Credit: Greg Nash/DVIDS

Distinguished Members



Sheena Chestnut Greitens

Sheena Chestnut Greitens is an Associate Professor at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin. From 2015-20, she was an assistant professor of political science at the University of Missouri and founding co-director of MU's Institute for Korean Studies. Her work focuses on East Asia, authoritarian politics, and American national security. She holds a doctorate from Harvard University; an M.Phil from Oxford University, where she studied as a Marshall Scholar; and a bachelor's from Stanford University.



Derek Grossman

Derek Grossman is a senior defense analyst at RAND focused on a range of national security policy and Indo-Pacific security issues. He served over a decade in the Intelligence Community, where he served as the daily intelligence briefer to the director of the Defense Intelligence Agency and the assistant secretary of defense for Asian & Pacific Security Affairs. He holds an M.A. from Georgetown University in U.S. National Security Policy and a B.A. from the University of Michigan in Political Science and Asian studies.



Kongdan "Katy" Oh Hassig

Kongdan "Katy" Oh Hassig is a Senior Asia Specialist at the Institute for Defense Analyses. She was formerly a Non-Resident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution and a member of the Political Science Department of the RAND Corporation. Dr. Hassig is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, an elected member of the Board of Directors of the United States Committee of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific, and a member of the Board of Directors for Korea Economic Institute of America. She is the co-founder and former co-director of The Korea Club of Washington, D.C.



Soo Kim

Soo Kim is a policy analyst at the RAND Corporation and an adjunct instructor at American University. Her research interests include the Korean Peninsula, Russia, Indo-Pacific strategy, near-peer competition, decision making, propaganda, and the intelligence community. She served as an analyst in the Central Intelligence Agency and also worked at the Department of Homeland Security. Kim earned a B.A. in French from Yale University and an M.A. in International Relations/Strategic Studies at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies.



Sung Hyun "Andrew" Kim

Sung Hyun "Andrew" Kim is a Non-Resident Fellow at Harvard's Kennedy School. Prior to this, he was a visiting scholar at Stanford University. Mr. Kim retired from the Central Intelligence Agency after 28 years of service and was the first Assistant Director of the CIA, Korea Mission Center. As the Chief of CIA Station in three major East Asian cities, Mr. Kim managed the collection, analysis, production, and distribution of information that directly affected national security. He is a recipient of the CIA Director's Award and the Presidential Rank Award.

Heino Klinck



Heino Klinck is a former U.S. Army China FAO who last served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia. His experience includes 2+ decades abroad; leading strategy efforts in a Fortune 100 company; senior political-military roles in the Pentagon; analytical and operational responsibilities in the intelligence community; and diplomatic postings in Europe and Asia. Mr. Klinck has a B.A. and M.A. in International Relations from Boston University; an MBA from the University of London; an M.S. in Global Strategy and Security from the University of Rome; and he was awarded a Fellowship by Stanford University's Asia-Pacific Research Center.

Mark William Lippert



The Honorable Mark William Lippert has a distinguished career in the United States government that spanned approximately two decades. From 2014-2017, he served as the U.S. ambassador and plenipotentiary to the Republic of Korea. He previously held positions in the Department of Defense, including as chief of staff to Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel and as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs. He graduated from Stanford University with a B.A. in Political Science and holds an M.A. in International Policy Studies from the same institution.

Curtis "Mike" Scaparrotti



General (Retired) Curtis "Mike" Scaparrotti led a distinguished, 41-year career in the U.S. Army, and most recently served as the Supreme Allied Commander Europe and Commander of U.S. European Command. Prior to this, he served as the Commander of U.S. Forces Korea/United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command from 2013 to 2016. GEN(R) Scaparrotti graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1978, and his education includes the Command and General Staff College, the U.S. Army War College, and a Master's degree in Administrative Education from the University of South Carolina.

Honorary Member

Major General Mark Gillette

Mark Gillette is a U.S. Army major general and the Senior Army Foreign Area Officer. He has extensive experience from various political-military assignments throughout Asia. MG Gillette holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the U.S. Military Academy, a Master of Social Science from Syracuse University, and a Master of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College. He is currently assigned as the U.S. Senior Defense Official and Defense Attaché in Cairo, Egypt.

MG Gillette advised and supported the initiatives of the co-founders of the FAOA Korea Chapter—both leading up to the organization's establishment and during its formative period. He continues to play an active role in the events and activities of the FAOA Korea Chapter today and is a key advocate for the development of its membership.

In recognition of his significant contribution toward accomplishing the mission of the FAOA Korea Chapter, MG Gillette was presented Honorary Membership on July 23, 2020.



Staff Members

Editor in Chief

Hedd Thomas is a writer and editor. He holds a B.A. from Newcastle University, England and an M.A. from Bangor University, Wales. He has edited publications in Belgium, the United Kingdom, and the Republic of Korea. He has written for numerous newspapers, online publications, and magazines.

Assistant Editor

Emily Stamp is an English instructor. She holds an undergraduate M.A. from the University of St. Andrews, Scotland and an M.A. in International Conflict Studies from King's College London, England.

Assistant Editor

Aa-young Kang is a journalist with an interest in technology and culture. She has published in a number of media outlets including WIRED, The Korea Times, and SCMP. She holds a Bachelor of Journalism from Dongguk University.

Assistant Editor

Apoorva Jayakumar is a Masters student pursuing a Global Economy and Strategy major at Yonsei Graduate School of International Studies. She enjoys reading and writing about Indo-Pacific strategy & policy.

Graphics Designer & Social Media Assistant

Sara La Cagnina is a Communications Coordinator who graduated with an M.A. in International Tourism from the Università Della Svizzera Italiana. She has extensive experience with digital communication and event coordination.

Graphics Designer & Social Media Assistant

Sun Reong Ok is a student pursuing a B.S. in Foreign Affairs at Silliman University, the Philippines. She grew up in the Philippines, and her interests include human rights and diplomacy.

Senior Researcher

Amos Oh is a U.S. Army Strategist with extensive policy and planning experience. He is a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy and also earned an M.P.A. from the Harvard Kennedy School. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Political Science and International Relations at the University of Southern California.

Associate Researcher

Gregory A. Pavone is a U.S. Navy FAO specializing in Indo-Pacific affairs. He is a 2012 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and also earned an M.P.P. in International and Global Affairs from Harvard Kennedy School.

Associate Researcher

Michael Brodka is an intelligence professional specializing in geopolitical affairs. He holds an M.P.S. degree from George Washington University and is currently pursuing an M.P.S. degree at Georgetown University.

Associate Researcher

Adrian Romero is an active duty Warrant Officer in the U.S. Army. He holds an A.A. degree in Applied Science and is currently pursuing an M.B.A. He has over ten years of work experience in the Indo-Pacific region.

Associate Researcher

Sean McCauley is an instructor based in South Korea. He is a political science graduate of the University of Alberta with a special focus on international relations; and he has extensive background in political advocacy in Canada.

Assistant Secretary

YoonJeong Choi is a student pursuing an AB-DTA/MRP degree at Bellevue College in Washington State. Her interests include e-commerce and fashion.

About the Korea Chapter

The FAOA Korea Chapter was founded in July 2020 in accordance with Article VII of the FAOA Charter. It is a 501(c)19 non-profit organization, consisting primarily of current and former Foreign Area Officers and International Affairs Specialists who advance the Republic of Korea-United States (ROK-U.S.) Alliance through events and activities that promote mentorship, education, research, and connection.

Our Mission

To develop and inspire leaders engaged in the advancement of the ROK-U.S. Alliance.

Our Core Values

- Commitment to Leader Development
- Pursuit of Inspiration

Board Members



Jacob Kim is a U.S. Army FAO specializing in the Northeast Asia and Latin America regions. He holds a Bachelors of Science degree from the U.S. Military Academy and a Master of Arts degree from the University of California Los Angeles. Jacob is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in education at Johns Hopkins University.
Contact: PresidentFAOAKC@gmail.com



Andrew Ahn is an active duty Major in the U.S. Air Force. He holds a Bachelors of Science degree from Arizona State University and a Master of Arts degree from the Naval Postgraduate School. Andrew has served over ten years as a Contracting Officer and as a FAO for the Indo-Pacific region.
Contact: VPFAOAKC@gmail.com



Wei C. Chou is a U.S. Army Northeast Asia FAO. He holds a Bachelors of Science degree from the United States Military Academy and a Master of Arts degree from the University of Hawaii as an East-West Fellow. After eight years as an airborne and mechanized infantryman, Wei served across a range of FAO capacities in Hawaii, Japan, and the Republic of Korea.
Contact: TreasurerFAOAKC@gmail.com



Michael "Mike" Poole is an active duty Major in the U.S. Army. He holds a Bachelors of Science degree from Southern Illinois University and a Master of Arts degree from Georgia Southern University. Mike has served over ten years as a Combat Engineer and as a Northeast Asia FAO.
Contact: SecretaryFAOAKC@gmail.com

"As I near the end of this assignment and my time as Treasurer and Co-Founder of the FAOA Korea Chapter, I would like to express my gratitude and humility for this experience and what will hopefully continue to grow into a thriving organization that advances the FAO body and our interlocutors' understanding and appreciation of what we bring to the table. I started my FAO career awestruck by the depth of knowledge and experience each individual FAO possessed, and I still am—almost as much as I am at what we can achieve together."

—Wei C. Chou, outgoing Treasurer of the FAOA Korea Chapter

Mentor

Mentor leaders engaged in advancing the ROK-U.S. Alliance and help them grow as individuals and professionals in their respective careers.

Educate

Educate leaders on Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic (DIME) actions and their Political, Military, Economic, Social, Information, and Infrastructure (PMESII) effects as they pertain to the ROK-U.S. Alliance.

Research

Enable, support, and encourage leaders to conduct research on topics relevant to the ROK-U.S. Alliance and provide opportunities to publish in peer-reviewed journals and publications.

Connect

Connect leaders in the military engaged in advancing the ROK-U.S. Alliance with leaders of industry, government, business, and think tanks to expand social and professional networks and facilitate the exchange of information.



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