

# DOD 2008 ANNUAL FOREIGN AREA OFFICER REPORT



**June 2009**



PERSONNEL AND  
READINESS

**OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE**

4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

JUL 16 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS  
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE  
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES

SUBJECT: FY 2008 DoD Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Program Review and Report

I am forwarding the Department of Defense (DoD) FY 2008 FAO Program Report. This report contains a review of the DoD FAO Program, the DoD Components' reports on their respective reviews, and fiscal year end data and resultant metrics. The annual report examines the DoD FAO Program from two different perspectives, the producers of FAOs (the Services) and the users of FAOs (the Joint Staff, Combatant Commands (COCOMS), and Defense Agencies).

The overall program review and report reveal the Services' significant challenges of filling FAO-coded billets with qualified FAOs and preparing for the continued increase in FAO requirements. As a first step in addressing these issues, I ask the Secretaries of the Military Departments to develop an action plan for their respective Service to resolve manpower shortfalls, meet and sustain current and emerging joint mission requirements with qualified personnel, and address other significant issues raised on each of the Service FY 2008 Annual Reports. I request the Military Departments submit their action plans no later than September 4, 2009.

The need is great and the demand is high for FAOs, reflecting a growing recognition from the COCOMs and Defense Agencies of the value and unique skills FAOs bring to the operational and strategic environment we face today. We need to take proactive steps now to preserve the momentum already achieved and ensure the FAO program can meet the critical needs of the Department.

Thank you for your attention and support to this important program.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gail H. McGinn".

Gail H. McGinn

Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Plans)

Performing the Duties of the

Under Secretary of Defense

(Personnel and Readiness)

cc:

COMMANDER, USEUCOM  
COMMANDER, USAFRICOM  
COMMANDER, USNORTHCOM  
COMMANDER, USSOCOM  
COMMANDER, USTRANSCOM  
COMMANDER, USSTRATCOM  
COMMANDER, USPACOM  
COMMANDER, USSOUTHCOM  
COMMANDER, USJFCOM  
COMMANDER, USCENTCOM

*Table of Contents*

Executive Summary .....1

Service Highlights .....2

FY 08 Annual Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Report .....3

    Background .....3

    Program Implementation .....3

    Requirements and Utilization .....5

    Initial Skills and Specialized Training .....8

    FAO Language Proficiency .....10

    Sustainment Training .....11

    Inter-military Department Coordination .....13

    Reserve FAO Program .....13

    FAO Metrics .....14

        Accession .....15

        Promotion and Retention .....18

        Attrition .....23

        Utilization .....24

        Training Costs .....26

    Way Ahead .....26

Services, Joint Staff, and Defense Agencies Executive Summaries .....28

    Army .....28

    Air Force .....29

    Navy .....30

Marine Corps .....	31
Defense Intelligence Agency .....	32
Defense Security Cooperation Agency .....	33
Defense Threat Reduction Agency .....	36
Joint Staff .....	37

# Department of Defense (DoD) 2008 Annual Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Report

## Executive Summary

This report provides the Office of the Secretary of Defense a review of the Services' FAO programs and the Joint FAO Program. Information contained in this report is based on the Services, Joint Staff (including Combatant Commands (COCOMs)), and Defense Agencies' annual FAO program reviews as reported in their 2008 Annual FAO Reports.

The DoD FAO Program continues to develop and expand its FAO population with nearly 1,770 officers currently holding the FAO designation, an increase of about 170 from FY 07. The Services plan to recruit and train almost 1,100 new FAOs by 2014. Interest in the FAO program remains high – FAO accessions goals in the number and quality of applicants were exceeded for the third consecutive year. Total applicants across all Services exceeded accession requirements by a DoD-wide average of 818 percent while qualified applicants exceeded requirements by 436 percent – an increase of 102 percent from FY 07.

Despite the planned growth and exceeding accession goals, progress is not sufficient to meet or keep pace with the growing demand for qualified FAOs. Some Services are forced to gap FAO billets or fill them with non-qualified FAOs. For example, Joint Staff and the COCOMs report a steady decline in qualified FAO fill rates: 90 percent in FY 06, 85 percent in FY 07, and 82 percent in FY 08. The trend at DIA and other Defense Agencies is similarly acute or growing.

All the while, more requirements continue to be added, reflecting the high value placed on the FAOs' advanced language skill and regional expertise. The Army is currently staffing a force design update, which could result in the placement of additional positions at Army Service Component Commands beginning in FY 09. The Marine Corps forecast 24 additional FAO-coded billets in FY 11 while the Air Force projects a long-term requirement of 300 FAO billets by FY 15. Additionally, the Joint Staff reported that the COCOMs project 67 new FAO billets over the next six years (35 Army, 26 Navy, 4 Air Force, and 2 Marine Corps).

With the current and growing need to increase the number of FAOs within the Department – also alluded to in reports written by the Defense Science Board Task Force and House of Representative Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations as well as an expressed concern from the Joint Staff and Defense Agencies – the Services need to take proactive steps now to meet current and future joint mission requirements.<sup>1</sup>

Inaction could hamper continued growth of the program which is a critical capability needed by the Department to face the challenges of our present security environment. Without an immediate and deliberate course forward, the Department runs the risk of losing substantial momentum and unable to meet Irregular Warfare mission requirements. The need is great and the demand is high for FAOs; proactive measures are needed to preserve the momentum already achieved and ensure the FAO program can meet the critical needs of the Department.

---

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Understanding Human Dynamics, March 2009. U.S. House of Representatives Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations Report on Building Language Skills and Cultural Competencies in the Military: DoD's Challenge in Today's Educational Environment, November 2008.

## Department of Defense (DoD) 2008 Annual Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Report

### Service Highlights

The Army FAO fill rate fell from 86 percent in FY 07 to 84 percent in FY 08. Army requirements grew by 65 in FY 08 and although the Army made some initial progress in increasing its accession requirements from 50 to 70 in FY 08, it accessioned only 46 officers into the program. The Army's goal to rebalance its force by FY 10 resulted in priority for building the brigade combat teams, thereby impacting all functional areas to include the FAO career field. Nonetheless, the Army reports that regular accessions would be back on track by FY 11. To help bridge the gap, the Army is exploring ways to partially offset demand through billet sharing (i.e., providing non-FAOs "broadening" experience) and increasing selection of "fully qualified" FAOs during the accession process, which will reduce time in training.

The Marine Corps reflected significant improvement in their fill rate primarily due to an overall reduction in the number of FAO-specific billets and with closer management of the FAO assignment process, fill rate went up from 49 percent in FY 07 to 72 percent in FY 08. The Navy's fill rate increased by 18 percent – from 48 percent to 66 percent in FY 08 – while the Air Force had a 4 percent increase – 6 percent to 10 percent. To address manpower shortages, the Air Force is currently filling FAO billets with "best fit officers" (non-qualified FAOs) until they grow sufficient number of FAOs in their program.

FAO promotion rates for O-5 and O-6 varied among the Services. The Air Force (reporting for the first time) and Marine Corps met the goal of FAO promotion rates at least equal to Service average promotion rates, while the Army and Navy were below Service averages. The Navy, for the second year, reported FAO promotion rates for O-5 and O-6 well below the service rate average at 50 percent and 67 percent lower, respectively. However, a large percentage of above zone officers were selected for promotion on these boards indicating the Navy is promoting the number of FAOs needed to meet near-term requirements. The Navy is currently reviewing promotion policies and developing a way ahead to bring the in-zone selection rate to levels equal to or better than Fleet average.

The DoD Joint FAO program continues to focus on the near term challenges of resource availability, sustainment training, and FAO personnel in the Reserve Components. The Navy and Air Force reported they were unable to implement a six-month in-country training program in FY 08 as required in DoDI 1315.20 due to funding constraints. However, the Air Force noted that plans are in place for a partial implementation in FY 09 and full implementation in FY 10. The Navy is presently reviewing options to reallocate language, regional expertise, and culture funding initiatives to provide initial funding to develop an in-country training program. The Services plan to fully utilize the Joint FAO Skill Sustainment Pilot Program approved by USD(P&R) in December 2008; the pilot will address the challenge of balancing time and operational requirements by using "out of the box" delivery techniques such as short-term classroom training and web-based distributed learning methods. Although the Services reported a slight breakthrough in their respective Reserve FAO programs, all acknowledge there is still work to be done in managing and monitoring FAO personnel in the Reserve Components.

## Department of Defense 2008 Annual Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Report

### 1. Background

This report provides the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) a review of the Services' FAO programs and the Joint FAO Program. Information contained in this report is based on the Services, Joint Staff (including COCOMs), and Defense Agencies' annual FAO program reviews as reported in their 2008 Annual FAO Reports. The annual review and report process looks at the DoD FAO Program from two different perspectives – from that of the producers of FAOs (the Services), and from the users of FAOs (the Joint Staff, Combatant Commands, and Defense Agencies).

DoD Directive (DoDD) 1315.17, *Military Department Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Programs*, signed by the Deputy Secretary of Defense on April 28, 2005, established the requirement for the annual review and report on the joint FAO Program for the Department. This is supplemented with the publication of DoD Instruction (DoDI) 1315.20, *Management of Department of Defense (DoD) Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Programs*, signed by the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel & Readiness (USD(P&R)) on September 28, 2007, which provides the report format, procedures, and reporting instructions for an Annual Report on DoD FAO Programs. Moreover, it establishes procedures to access, develop, retain, motivate, and manage all FAOs within the Department.

The 2008 Annual FAO Report is the third published report since reporting requirements and FAO metrics were established in 2005. The metrics provide the Services and OSD with a standard set of measurements to evaluate the success of Service programs to meet stated requirements in the areas of accession, utilization, promotion, and retention. This is the first year all four Services provided the required FAO metrics. The Navy and Air Force were unable to provide complete metrics data in previous annual reports due to early development of their FAO programs. Data from the 2006 annual review and report was used to form a baseline of information to track and monitor FAO utilization and career progression, identify trends, and examine impacts of alternative practices among the Service programs.

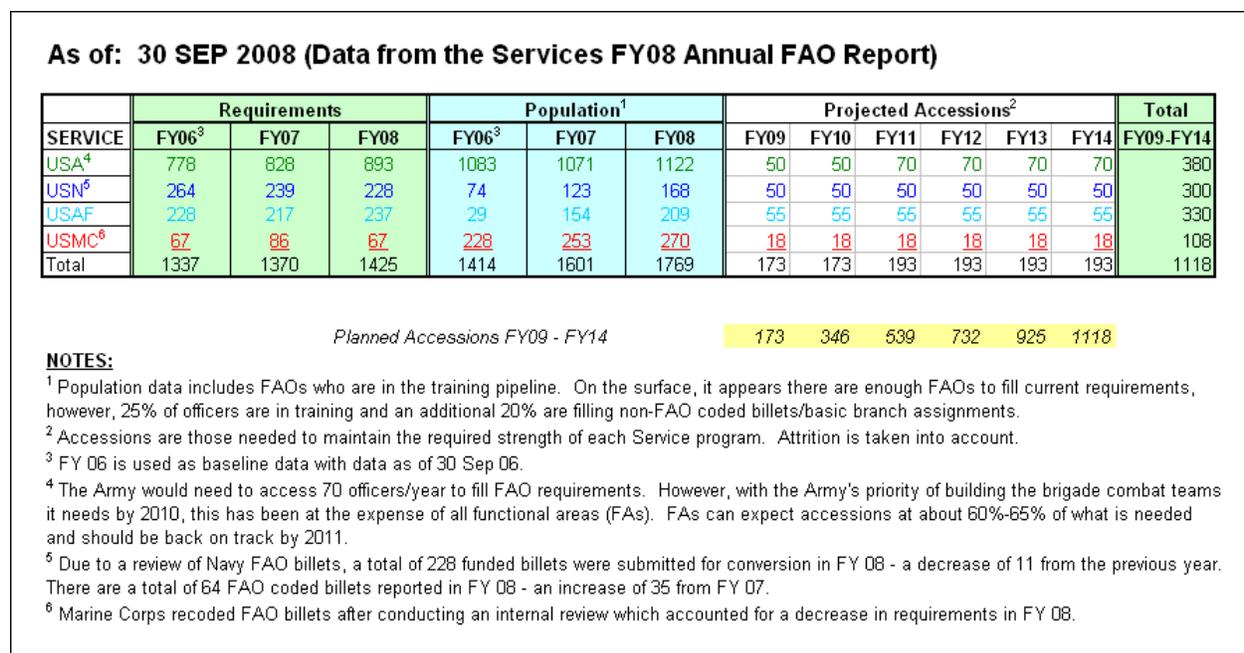
A memo signed by the USD(P&R) in July 2008 levied additional reporting requirements to the Services, Joint Staff and Defense Agencies to address in their FY 08 annual report. Three issues they were asked to focus on were: 1) FAO requirements including support to COCOMs; 2) plans to increase foreign language proficiency skills to the professional level [i.e., Interagency Language Roundtable Level Reading 3/ Listening 3/ Speaking 3] to include sustainment training initiatives; and 3) their respective Service Reserve FAO Program. Components' responses and the related FAO metrics are addressed in this report.

### 2. Program Implementation

The DoD FAO Program is currently in its fourth year of implementation since it was reinvigorated and restructured in 2005 to better meet the Department's needs in the critical areas of language, cultural, and regional expertise. The FAO is the Department's uniformed expert that possesses a unique combination of strategic focus, regional expertise, cultural awareness, and

foreign language proficiency. Most commonly, FAOs serve as defense attachés, security assistance officers, political-military planners in Service Headquarters, Joint Staff, combatant commands, or a defense agency. They also serve as arms control treaty inspectors, and liaison officers to host nation or coalition allies. Additionally, an increasing number of FAOs also serve as political and cultural advisors to combatant staffs in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, highlighting the importance of foreign language proficiency, cultural awareness, and regional expertise – the high value skill sets that FAOs bring to the table.

The Department has two programs with mature policies and experiences (Army and Marine Corps), and two programs growing from their nascent stage of development (Navy and Air Force). All are in the midst of building FAOs with a set of common training guidelines, developmental experiences, and language, cultural, and regional expertise standards. Under the oversight of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (OUSD(P&R)), the DoD FAO Program continues to develop and expand its FAO population. Approximately 1,770 officers currently hold the FAO designation, including the 25 percent that are still in training, an increase of about 170 from the previous year. The Services plan to recruit and train more than 170 a year, with almost 1,100 new FAOs entering the program by 2014 (Figure 1).



**Figure 1 – FAO Requirements, Populations and Accessions**

The Army and Navy have a single-track approach to FAO career management, while the Air Force and Marine Corps have a dual-track approach. In a single-track program, FAOs are managed in a restricted sub-specialty for assignments and career management. Once an officer is designated a FAO, he/she would generally serve only in FAO positions and compete for promotion and assignments primarily with other FAOs. In a dual-track program, a designated FAO would ideally serve alternately between their primary career field and FAO assignments. In the review of the FAO reports, the main differences of the two tracks are time available for training and the possibility of repetitive assignments. Dual-track officers have a more limited

opportunity (time available) for training to be a FAO due to the requirements of their primary career field. On the other hand, the dual-track FAOs may have greater opportunities to remain well-grounded in their basic military skill or designation. As the Air Force noted in their report, having Regional Affairs Strategist (RAS) officers – Air Force designation for FAOs – serve in alternating assignments increases the relevancy and credibility of their military bona fides in the international affairs environment. Additionally, it ensures RAS officers can transfer their regional expertise and insights into military utility. During the compilation of the FAO metrics, it was noted that the dual-track programs – Marine Corps and Air Force – exceeded Service average promotion rates for O-5 and O-6 in FY 08 while the single-track programs – Army and Navy – were below their Service averages. It is too early to assign cause and effect because this is the first year all four Services provided the required FAO metrics. Nonetheless, OUSD(P&R) will continue to monitor changes and trends in this area. Figure 2 below shows a comparison of the FAO Program among the Services.

	DoD Requirements	Navy	Army	Air Force	USMC
Accession	Broad Mil exp Primary MOS Qual Competitive Selection Commissioned Officers	6-12 Years URL/RL/Staff Board Select	7-10 Yrs Primary MOS Qual Board select	Regional Affairs Strategist (RAS) - 7-10 yrs Board select	3-11 yrs Possess Primary MOS Qual Study Track - Board select Experience Track - Board select
Education/ Training	Graduate education in a regional area Language 3/3/3 In-country/immersion	3 yrs Graduate Studies Language In-country Training (ICT)	3 yrs Language (1 <sup>st</sup> ) In-country Training (ICT) Graduate Studies	2-3 yrs Graduate Studies Language In-country Training (ICT)	3 yrs Graduate Studies Language In-country Training (ICT)
Career Track (for promotion and assignment)	Ensure competitive career advancement	Single Track Own Restricted Line community and promotion category (1710 – FAO designator)	Single Track (FA 48 – FAO designator)	Dual Track Both tracks remain under Primary AFSC (16F – FAO AFSC)	Dual Track Both tracks remain under Primary MOS
Usage	US DoD Rep to foreign governments and military establishments	All FAO assignments	All FAO assignments	Alternate assignments with MOS	Alternate assignments with MOS
Sustain	Provide expertise sustainment and refresher training throughout lifecycle	Tailored training before 2 <sup>nd</sup> FAO assignment	Tailored training before 2 <sup>nd</sup> FAO assignment	Tailored training before 2 <sup>nd</sup> FAO assignment	Tailored training before 2 <sup>nd</sup> FAO assignment

Figure 2 – Service Program Comparison

### 3. Requirements and Utilization

As stated earlier, FAO requirements were one of the issues tasked to the Services, Joint Staff, and Defense Agencies to focus on in their annual report. The process of properly identifying and validating FAO requirements is a critical element in building and sustaining the program. With an average training time for a FAO of two to three years, it is imperative that the Services have an accurate picture, not only of current requirements, but also of outyear needs (e.g., up to six years), in order to fulfill their responsibilities as force providers.

The growing demand for FAOs and FAO-like skills coupled with the insufficient number of qualified FAOs to meet current and forecasted needs has created the need for the Department to evaluate the concept of a civilian corps with FAO-like skills. Leading the way for their niche needs, the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence (USD(I)) is currently reviewing a concept to build a cadre of civilian intelligence foreign area specialists – the civilian equivalent to a FAO – with foreign language proficiency and regional/country knowledge. If implemented, this pilot

program will provide a valuable capability to complement and augment the DoD FAO Program. USD(P&R) will also explore a civilian non-intelligence FAO concept to augment the FAO program within the Department.

### **Services - Requirements and Utilization**

The Marine Corps made great strides in validating their requirements during this reporting period. After it was identified that several billets within the Marine Corps' Total Force Management System were inappropriately assigned as FAO-specific billets, a resulting review found a number of billets for which FAO skills were desired but not required. Appropriate administrative action was taken to tighten up the list of Marine FAO billets, and, with closer management of the FAO assignment process, the rate at which FAO billets are filled by qualified FAOs went up from 49% in FY 07 to 72% in FY 08. The Marine Corps expects to see further improvement in FAO utilization as FAO billet requirements are continually evaluated to better reflect both joint and internal Marine Corps needs. The Marine Corps also accelerated FAO accessions in FY 08, at more than twice the traditional accession rate, in anticipation of additional FAO billets opening up starting in FY 11.

The Army envisions further demand as FAOs adapt to fulfill operational commander needs while executing contingency missions and conducting theater security cooperation with key partner nations. The Army has added FAO billets to the corps level over the past few years. Currently, it is staffing a force design update (FDU), which could result in the placement of additional positions at Army Service Component Commands (ASCC) starting in FY 09. These officers will work in Security Cooperation Divisions at the ASCC and support leadership efforts through the development of policy, and the execution of theater security cooperation plans. Despite growth in the program, Army accessions have not and are not currently programmed to keep pace with increasing requirements, which could impact meeting and/or sustaining current and future demands. The Army made some initial progress in increasing its accession requirements from 50 to 70 in FY 08. However, only 46 officers were accessed into the program as a result of the Army's goal to rebalance its force by FY 10 to give priority to building the brigade combat teams (thereby negatively impacting all functional areas to include the FAO career field). The Army report states that accessions will be back on track by FY 11 and that they will be able to access the required 70 to meet FAO demands. The Army is exploring ways to partially offset current and anticipated demand by increasing selection of "fully qualified" FAO applicants during the accession process and through "billet sharing" to provide non-FAOs "broadening" experience by serving in FAO billets.

The Air Force projects a near-term requirement of 250 active duty RAS positions and a long-term need for approximately 300 RAS positions. The number of RAS requirements is expected to increase as some security assistance/security cooperation (SA/SC) officers in security cooperation organizations (SCO) are converted and filled by RAS-qualified officers. In order to have the resources necessary to fill RAS requirements as a secondary career specialty, the Air Force has a steady-state requirement to develop 55 RAS officers annually. At this accession rate, the Air Force states they will be able to fill all its RAS positions with certified officers in eight years (FY 16). To help fill the gap, the Air Force is currently filling RAS billets with "best fit officers" (non-qualified FAOs) until they grow more RAS officers in their program.

The Navy continues to work on their FAO requirements process. In FY 06, the Navy reported a proposed requirement of 264 for the newly established program with a long-term requirement of 300 operational billets. The Navy coded the first 29 FAO billets in FY 07 since they had zero FAO coded requirements the previous year. An additional 35 FAO billets were coded in FY 08 and plans are underway for additional billet conversions. Considerable work remains to finish identifying billets needed to reach the target end strength of 300 operational billets. This continued growth also must be “shaped” to align with the Chief of Naval Operations’ strategic priorities in which Navy FAOs play a key role in accomplishing the strategic imperatives of fostering and sustaining cooperative relationships with international partners while preventing and containing local conflicts.

### **Joint Staff and COCOMs - Requirements and Utilization**

Despite progress made by the Services in refining their requirements, Joint Staff reported that fill rate of billets by qualified FAOs continues to be an ongoing concern. The COCOMs and Joint Staff reported 421 FAO billets, including 24 that are coded as Reserve billets. The FY 08 fill rate may appear to be quite healthy, because 92 percent of 421 billets are filled and this represents a six percent increase from FY 07. However, the fill rate of billets by qualified FAOs is only 82 percent. Therefore, the actual overall fill rate for FAO-coded billets in Joint Staff and the COCOMs is on a steady decline: 90 percent in FY 06, 85 percent in FY 07, and 82 percent in FY 08. This trend is likely to worsen if Services do not act quickly. U.S. Central Command is the most affected COCOM with only 49 percent of their billets filled by qualified FAOs (Army: 48 authorized with 38 assigned for 79 percent; and Air Force: 31 authorized with zero assigned for 0 percent). Since the Air Force has a small pool of qualified RAS in their inventory (81 qualified RAS officers for 237 coded billets in FY 08), they are currently filling these billets using a mix of best-fit officers and certified RAS officers. With fill rate by qualified FAOs an ongoing concern and projected increases in FAO billets in the near and long-terms, a dedicated effort by all the Services is essential to ensure each is fulfilling its responsibilities as force providers. As Joint Staff noted in its report, “plans for FAO program growth are inadequate to meet Combatant Command requirements.”

Despite the steady decline in fill rate by qualified FAOs, Joint Staff reported that seven COCOMs project adding 67 new FAO billets over the next six years. The increases are distributed as follows: 35 Army, 26 Navy, 4 Air Force, and 2 Marine Corps. The increasing role FAOs play within the COCOMs is captured when U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) noted that with the development of its role as the distribution process owner (DPO), it has increased the need to coordinate with multiple theater partners in establishing appropriate support especially at international aerial ports and ports of embarkation/debarkation. Additionally, international interest in TRANSCOM’s innovative defense logistics and global supply-chain management processes has increased international partner willingness to participate in TRANSCOM’s security cooperation program. FAOs help to promote increased global access, supporting worldwide deployment, distribution, and sustainment of our armed forces in support of TRANSCOM’s role. Joint Staff also reported that for the first time, U.S. Strategic Command (STRATCOM) identified seven billets that require foreign area expertise with five of the seven require language skills; notably, all are civilian positions.

## **Defense Agencies - Requirements and Utilization**

Although Army FAOs continue to fill a majority of the FAO coded billets within the Defense Agencies, the trend appears to be for expanded distribution and growth of the requirements among the Services. The Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), for instance, would like to see Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps FAOs assigned to their security cooperation organizations (SCO). As new Service FAO programs mature (e.g. Air Force and Navy), DSCA will work with the Services to bring their FAOs into the SA/SC community, both at the Headquarters and in the field. Coupled with their service-specific knowledge and FAO skills, they would enhance mission accomplishment within the organization. Additionally, DSCA is working with the Joint Staff to develop a surge capability for SCOs. This would enable DoD to better respond to emergent crises and contingencies requiring increased cooperation with partner countries. An effective surge capability is dependent upon personnel with the language skills and cultural understanding necessary for rapid integration into the partner country setting. Generally, the overall impact is an increased steady-state FAO demand and, specifically, an expanded requirement for FAOs in countries and regions affected by Irregular Warfare to fill SCO positions. DCSA reported that FAOs are best-suited for this requirement; demand for their use in surging SCOs will only increase.

In addition, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency's (DTRA) expanding programs portend a requirement for a more global FAO representation as opposed to the present steady-state requirement for almost exclusively Army FAOs. Turning to new mission requirements, DTRA will require FAOs with skill sets for new emerging areas, which include sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and Southeast and Northeast Asia. As an initial first step, DTRA plans to recode a billet to a Northeast Asia FAO in response to increased presence and activities on the Korean peninsula. Additionally, DTRA plans to formulate a request for an increase of FAOs for the Agency in the event the situation in North Korea evolves to the point where a confidence and security building measures framework can be implemented. As the new Service programs continue to develop and provide a pool of Navy, Air Force, and Marine FAOs, DTRA is looking to broaden its expertise by either recoding existing positions or requesting additional Service augmentation.

### **4. Initial Skills and Specialized Training**

The Services recognize the common set of skills needed to become a qualified FAO, as established by the Department in 2005. These include: foreign language skills at a professional level (i.e. Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Reading 3/Listening 3 and with a goal of Speaking 3); a post-graduate degree in applicable regional studies; and in-country experience in advance of a FAO assignment are found in each program and required in the DoD Joint FAO Program. These common skills standards ensure that, regardless of Service, all FAOs should bring the same high value core competencies and capabilities to joint operational as well as Service-specific assignments. FAOs generally receive their language training from the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC), either in Monterey, CA or Washington, D.C. Graduate-level education is obtained at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) for the Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force while the Army continues to focus on civilian universities for graduate-level education. The greatest difference in levels of training is in the length of in-

country training (ICT). The Army and Marine Corps policies provide 12 months (or more) while the Navy and Air Force provide six months (the minimum required in DoDI 1315.20). Unfortunately, the Navy and Air Force were unable to fully implement even their six months of ICT program in FY 08 due to funding constraints. The Air Force reported that command and control, manpower, logistics, contracting, and training elements are in place for a partial implementation in FY 09 and they are planning for full implementation in FY 10. The Navy reported that ICT was an unfunded requirement in FY 08. They are reviewing options to reallocate language, regional expertise, and culture funding initiatives to provide initial funding to develop an in-country training program.

The Army is looking at optimizing or combining language and in-country training (ICT) as a means of shortening the training pipeline in order to meet current demands. Plans are underway to implement a pilot program, beginning in the summer of 2009, which will reduce initial training for selected areas of concentration. The Army anticipates this pilot will improve training efficiencies without compromising FAO core competencies.

The Air Force noted that with the implementation of the new Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT 5), a large number of their students at DLIFLC failed to meet the 2/2 criteria. These students are allowed to graduate, and then are provided tutors and immersion opportunities to the maximum extent possible in order to increase their scores. However, they are not certified as RAS officers until they meet the 2/2 criteria. Further study and monitoring will be needed to determine the effects of the DLPT 5 with its phased-in implementation in language testing.

Following the initial skills period of training and education to become qualified under the DoD Joint FAO Program, FAOs attend Professional Military Education courses and pre-assignment courses that are standard for their Service and/or the Agency/Activity they are to be assigned. These courses allow FAOs to study job-specific or joint subjects with their Service and other Service contemporaries. Some FAO duty positions require specialized pre-assignment training. These include assignments as an attaché or as a security assistance officer. FAOs assigned to one of these positions attend a course of instruction prior to their deployment in-country. These courses expand upon previous general military and FAO training, focusing on the unique aspects of the duty assignment, the country, and the bilateral relationship between the United States and the host country. In some cases, additional language training is part of the pre-deployment training regime. As noted by DIA, more than 70 percent of nominees for the Joint Military Attaché School (JMAS) arrive for attaché training with no proficiency in the principal language of the country to which they are being assigned. Thus, rather than focus on moving an experienced, language-capable FAO up to a higher level of language skill (e.g. from Limited Working Proficiency – Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) 2 to General Professional Proficiency – ILR 3), the majority of available resources must be devoted to the acquisition of the basic language qualification – ILR 2 – before the officer is deployed. Additionally, the time allocated for officers to attend JMAS and language training is normally insufficient for an adequate language training program before they must report to their duty station overseas.

A working group led by DIA recently convened with participation from the Services, Joint Staff, DLI-Washington, and OSD to address this issue. Much work remains as the Services review and closely examine their assignment process to ensure FAOs have, at a minimum, an ILR 2 level of

proficiency in the language of the country to which they are being assigned. This will alleviate having an officer on a longer language training program and thus can focus on improving and/or enhancing their language to a higher level of proficiency (ILR3). Users of FAOs (Joint Staff, Combatant Commands, and Defense Agencies) must also be proactive in identifying and documenting additional requirements for FAOs with specific language capabilities and forecast them well in advance since it takes at least one year to train a FAO for an additional language. Sufficient time must be allocated for officers to complete a full language course especially if an officer is learning a new language since this will dramatically improve their ability to perform their mission. When representing the Secretary of Defense or Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff or the COCOM Commander, a FAO cannot afford to get only 60% or even 80% of the message right, especially in dealing with important political-military issues.

## **5. FAO Language Proficiency**

As the Department moves to build language, cultural, and regional knowledge throughout the general purpose forces, we need to ensure FAOs maintain their professional relevance by sustaining and enhancing their language proficiency and cultural and regional expertise in their particular region. As part of the reporting requirements in DoDI 1315.20, the Services provided FAO language proficiency ratings by language, rank and ILR ratings, which was compiled and broken down by fiscal year (Figures 3-4).

DoD-wide, there has been a marked increase in foreign language proficiency of officers with at least an ILR level 2 and above from FY 07 to FY 08, with a slight increase of ILR 3 proficiency from 660 to 686. The Navy reported that six FAOs were able to achieve proficiency higher than ILR 3: three in Arabic-Lebanese at ILR 4, one in Spanish at ILR 3+/3+, one in French at ILR 3+, and one in Russian at ILR 3+/4. Despite some improvement in language proficiency levels, the Services reported that there is still a significant number of FAOs – a total of 123 – with less than ILR 2 proficiency level. They attribute this to FAOs attempting the DLPT in other languages (aside from their primary language) who studied it on their own initiative. Although the Department encourages officers to acquire additional foreign language skills in the area or region of their specialty, a higher level of language proficiency of each language is highly desired. An additional factor that will be closely watched over the near term is the effect of the new DLPT 5, which had a lowering effect on test scores. The Services acknowledge that a good comprehensive language sustainment program is needed to ensure FAOs maintain and sustain their language proficiency skills.

Unfortunately, the Services were only able to provide language proficiency ratings for listening and reading modalities in their annual reports. One of the core competencies of a FAO is the ability to speak a foreign language. DoDD 1315.17 and DoDI 1315.20 state that FAOs must possess foreign language skills at the professional level with the goal of ILR 3 in all modalities. More Service focus and emphasis is needed to ensure the speaking modality is captured, reported, documented, and, as needed, improved upon, so that sufficient oral foreign language capability exists across the Department.

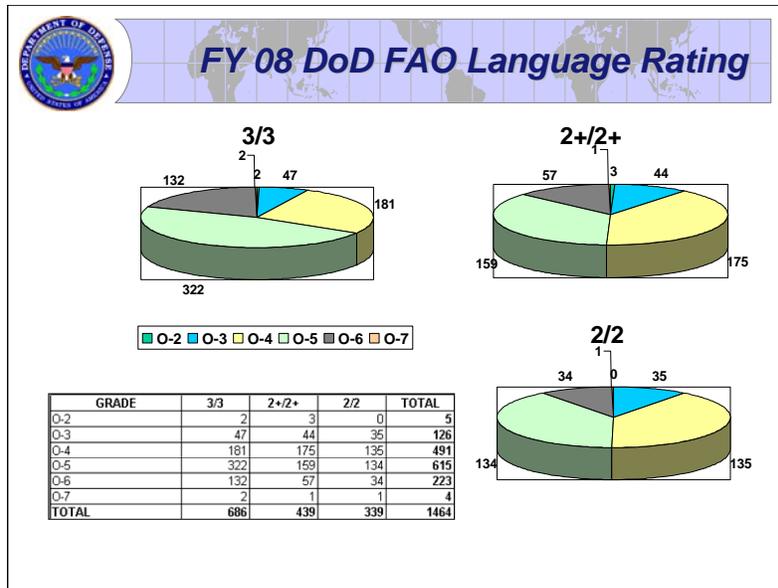


Figure 3 – FY 08 FAO Language Rating

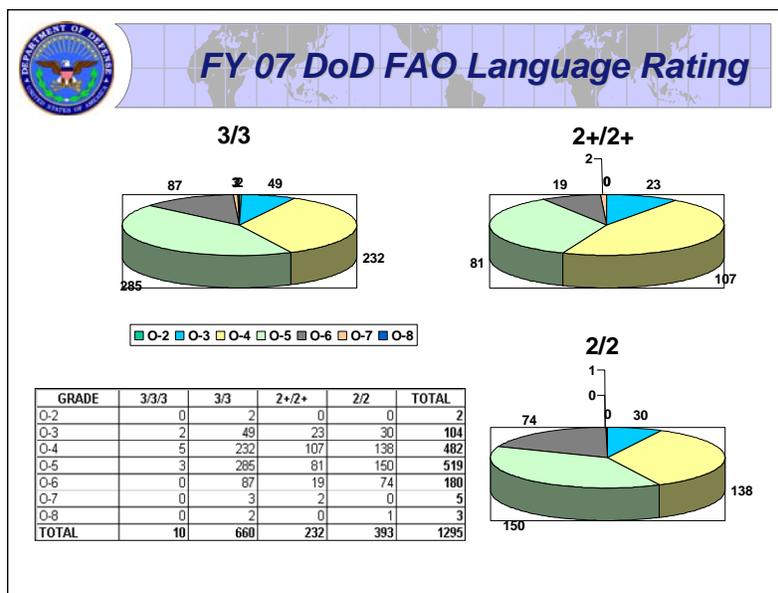


Figure 4 – FY 07 FAO Language Rating

## 6. Sustainment Training

The Services were asked to address their plans to increase foreign language proficiency skills to the professional level (i.e., Interagency Language Roundtable Level Reading 3, Listening 3, and Speaking 3) to include sustainment training initiatives. As discussed earlier, the Department still has some work to do in building a capability in a foreign language at the professional level. DoDD 1315.17 and DoDI 1315.20 directs that a dedicated and comprehensive sustainment effort must be instituted to insure language proficiency and regional expertise skills are not degraded or lost and officers can operate at peak performance. Comprehensive sustainment training is an integral element of a FAO's career and lifecycle development; the higher language proficiency requirements make this even more essential.

The Services recognize the limited number of opportunities for FAOs to conduct language and regional studies sustainment training. Balancing the time required for refresher training with the demands of billets in the operating forces continues to be a challenge. The Army and Navy expect their FAOs to maintain their language and regional capabilities through consecutive FAO assignments in their regions and as staff officers at various levels working on regional issues. All have web-based language training programs such as Rosetta Stone, LingNet/GLOSS, and Transparent Language available to their officers. Moreover, depending upon timing and assignment, some FAOs will receive additional refresher language training between assignments.

Besides web-based language programs, the Air Force provides a Language and Area Studies Immersion (LASI) training program for its RAS officers. LASI is a 1 to 2-month intensive area studies immersion with classroom learning, one-on-one tutoring, and cultural excursions. They also offer their RAS officers the opportunity to attend a regional study program at the Air Force Special Operations School, Foreign Service Institute, and/or at a DoD Regional Security Studies Center.

The Marine Corps is exploring an initiative to enhance overall FAO skill sustainment. This pilot program will be focused on FAOs serving with the III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) based out of Okinawa, Japan. This program will consist of language and regional expertise sustainment through two principal methods: 1) extensive use of local tutors, language labs, and online language maintenance programs at each duty station, and, 2) annual re-immersion opportunities for limited periods (10-14 days) in the respective countries/regions of expertise. If successful, this pilot program will be expanded to include FAOs serving with the other two MEFs. Funding for this program remains elusive to this date. Provision for in-house Marine Corps FAO skill sustainment training has been submitted in Service POM-10 requests; however, in the near-term, it is hoped that it can be funded as part of the Joint FAO Skill Sustainment Program that is currently underway.

The DoD 2007 Annual FAO Report revealed there is no formal, joint training program for FAOs to sustain the professional development of language skills and regional expertise. To help address this gap, USD(P&R) approved a three-year pilot program in December 2008. The goal of the Joint FAO Skill Sustainment Pilot Program is to find innovative ways to provide foreign language and regional sustainment training for seasoned FAOs to enable them to meet growing joint mission requirements. This pilot, in collaboration with the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), will be established at NPS due to its unique combination of extensive regional studies and access to, and partnerships with, advanced language resources in the Monterey, California area. The pilot program will commence with a DoD FAO Conference in Summer 2009, bringing seasoned FAOs and FAO stakeholders together to discuss training modalities, intervals, and performance measures. The conference proceedings, documented in a "white paper", will outline the foundation and framework for the pilot. To meet the challenge of balancing time and operational requirements, the pilot will utilize advanced, innovative delivery techniques such as short-term classroom training and web-based distributed learning methods. This pilot program will serve as a template for sustaining and enhancing professional level skills as we continue building language proficiency, regional expertise, and culture capability throughout the

Department. The Services acknowledge in their annual reports that they plan to support and utilize the pilot to augment their respective sustainment programs.

## **7. Inter-military Department Coordination**

The Services, as directed by the DoDD 1315.17, are working to “coordinate efforts with the other Military Departments, where practical, to take advantage of established training programs and initiatives to achieve mutual benefits and resource efficiency.” An excellent example, and a best practice now being integrated into all FAO training is the Army’s FAO Orientation Course and a new joint FAO course – Eurasia Security Studies Seminar – offered at the George C. Marshall Center.

The FAO Orientation Course provides the newly selected FAO with an overview and understanding of the FAO program, career field, and regional/country-specific information. The course is conducted twice a year for new FAOs in language training at DLIFLC or attending graduate school at NPS and was held in January and July 2008. Approximately 106 new FAOs from all Services attended the events in January and July, and the number of participants continues to increase each year.

The inaugural Eurasian Security Studies Seminar (ES3) was recently conducted at the George C. Marshall Center in January 2009 with participation from all the Services. Focusing on contemporary Eurasian security issues and U.S. and partner responses to these issues, the ES3 is equally appropriate for ICT FAOs and for experienced FAOs already serving in the field. In addition to the one-week academic module, the ES3 offered a one-week practical module focused on the FAO's role in U.S. policy development and implementation, and a one-week field study to EUCOM, USAREUR, DTRA-Europe, SHAPE, and NATO. A total of 18 FAOs (10 Army, 5 Air Force, 2 Marine Corps, and 1 Navy) participated in the seminar and the course was very well received. The Marshall Center plans to offer this course twice annually, in September and January. Future iterations will include an optional language refresher module.

Although there is a significant amount of inter-military coordination on an informal basis, cooperation and successes are captured formally in a quarterly OSD FAO Proponent meeting. These quarterly meetings are attended by representatives from the Service FAO Proponent Offices, the Joint Staff, Defense Agencies (DIA, DTRA, DSCA), key OSD Staff and chaired by the Defense Language Office. This allows all the members to brief their FAO program’s current status and share lessons learned or raise issues as they develop. As each program is in a different state of transition, there are very few challenges that have not been identified and resolved by at least one of the Service FAO programs. Each Service FAO program is able to advance and improve by sharing the best practices and lessons learned established by other programs.

## **8. Reserve FAO Program**

Although the Reserve FAO Program was addressed in the Services’ annual reports, they acknowledge that there is still work to be done in managing and monitoring FAO personnel in the Reserve Components. The Services recognize the Reserve Component FAOs are a key component to the success of the overall Joint FAO Program. The Army and Marine Corps have

“dual-track” Reserve FAO programs while the Navy and Air Force are continuing to evaluate and develop Reserve Component FAO programs.

The Army and Marine Corps do not have dedicated personnel working their respective FAO Reserve Programs. To fill the gap, the active duty FAO program managers are working with the Reserve human resources personnel activities to develop strategies to address requirements and fill rates. Both Services are accessing Reserve FAOs that are already “fully qualified”; the Army reported 118 (up from 49 in FY 07) and Marine Corps 28 (down from 33 in FY 07) Reserve FAOs in their respective programs. Despite the praiseworthy Army increase in the number of designated Army FAOs, fill rate remains a challenge in FY 08; the Army had 62 vacant Reserve FAO billets out of 109 requirements.

The Navy is exploring a Reserve Component option for FAOs and is in the early stages of defining the Reserve FAO requirement. Over the reporting period, a dual-track model similar to the Army’s Reserve FAO program was considered. However, after further analysis, a single-track Navy Reserve FAO community was determined to better serve the Navy’s needs. The Navy Reserve FAO program, when established, will be accomplished within existing budgetary and end strength constraints. Initial composition is expected to be from Reserve officers that can meet the FAO certification requirements of DoDI 1315.20 upon redesignation as a FAO.

The Air Force Reserve International Affairs Specialist (IAS) Program is presently under development and work is underway towards developing a Total Force RAS program. An Air Reserve Component working group was established to address Air National Guard (ANG) and Air Force Reserve issues relating to the IAS program. This working group identified requirements and made recommendations for incorporation into the new Air Force Instruction 16-109, *International Affairs Specialist Program*. Currently, the Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC) A2 functions as the Reserve RAS career field manager (CFM), responsible for the training and development of Reserve RAS officers. The CFM is currently examining options to implement a formal process to identify, and select Reserve officers for IAS training opportunities and future development. Additionally, the Air Force Reserve is planning an aggressive outreach campaign specifically targeting Reserve officers who have existing international affairs skills. This process captures civilian political-military and regional experience, which can be equivalent to the experience and training active duty officers receive when accessed in the IAS program. Lastly, in order to capitalize on the training programs and processes already in place on the active duty side, the Air Force RAS Proponent Office is hiring a Reserve officer to liaise with the Reserve Command and to develop and implement the Reserve Program.

## **9. FAO Metrics (Data as of September 30, 2008)**

DoDD 1315.17 requires the USD(P&R) to establish standard metrics and monitor FAO accession, promotion, retention, and utilization rates. The standard metrics were developed in coordination with the Military Services and the Joint Staff. The metrics provide the Services and OSD with a standard set of measurements to determine the success of Service programs to meet stated requirements in the areas of accession, promotion, retention, and utilization. This is the third annual report to cover an entire fiscal year and documents data and progress through September 30, 2008. Data from the 2006 annual review and report was used to form the baseline

of information to track and monitor FAO utilization and career progression, identify trends, and examine impacts of alternative practices among the Service programs.

The analysis of the data submitted by the Services for FAO metrics are useful in measuring the effectiveness of the FAO program initiatives and identifying trends. This is the first year all four Services provided the required FAO metrics as the Navy and Air Force grow from its early stages of development. OUSD(P&R) in coordination with the Services will continue to review and monitor the metrics and will update and adjust as new trends, requirements, or issues are identified.

FAO Accession. The metric on accession applicant rate is designed to measure the volume of applicants to determine if each FAO program is receiving a sufficient number to maintain a healthy program. DoD-wide focus on the importance of FAOs and corresponding incentives has greatly increased the number and quality of applicants. As a result, the Department exceeded all FAO accession goals in the number and quality of applicants for the third year in a row. Applicants in all Services exceeded requirements by a DoD-wide average of 818 percent with approximately 1,635 officers applying for 200 required FAO accessions (Figure 5). The Services attribute the high accession rate to concerted and aggressive outreach programs such as speaking engagements, publication of newsletters, and websites. The Navy reported that as knowledge about the Navy program increased and additional interest in the community was generated, they concurrently sought to improve the application review process to provide more opportunities for officers to apply.

During this reporting period, the Marine Corps and Air Force accessed more officers than their required accession goal due to projected increase in billet requirements. The Marine Corps accessed 11 additional officers via the Experience Track path in addition to the 25 required accessions selected via the Study Track, while the Air Force accessed 2 more officers above their 55 required accessions. Unfortunately, the same thing cannot be said for the Army. Although the Army increased their accession requirements from 50 to 70 in FY 08, they were only able to access 46 officers into the program. The Army's goal to rebalance its force by FY 10 resulted in priority for building the brigade combat teams, thereby impacting all functional areas to include the FAO career field. The Army report stated that accession will be back on track by FY 11 and that they will be able to access the required 70 to meet FAO demands.

Of special note is the number of officers selected during the accessions board in FY 08 who met all or some of the FAO qualification standards. The Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps selected 17, 40, 13, and 11 officers, respectively, consequently shortening the training program and immediately making these officers available to fill a FAO billet. These officers either have documented foreign language proficiency and/or a graduate degree focused on, but not limited to, the political, cultural, sociological, economic, and geographic factors of specific foreign countries and regions. The Navy reported that 12 of the 49 FAOs accessed in FY 08 were heritage speakers. The Army is currently reviewing its accession process and exploring ways to increase selection of "fully qualified" FAOs into their program as a way to meet the immediate demand of FAO billets.

The FAO applicant quality metric is designed to measure the quality of FAO applicants in order to maintain a quality program. As Figures 6 & 7 illustrate, the quality of applicants remains strong, providing FAO selection panels with more than four qualified applicants per requirement – an increase of one from FY 07. Qualified applicants exceed requirements by 436 percent with over 871 qualified officers applying for 200 required FAO accessions (Figure 6). Overall, applicant quality rate increased for most of the Services in FY 08 (Figure 7).

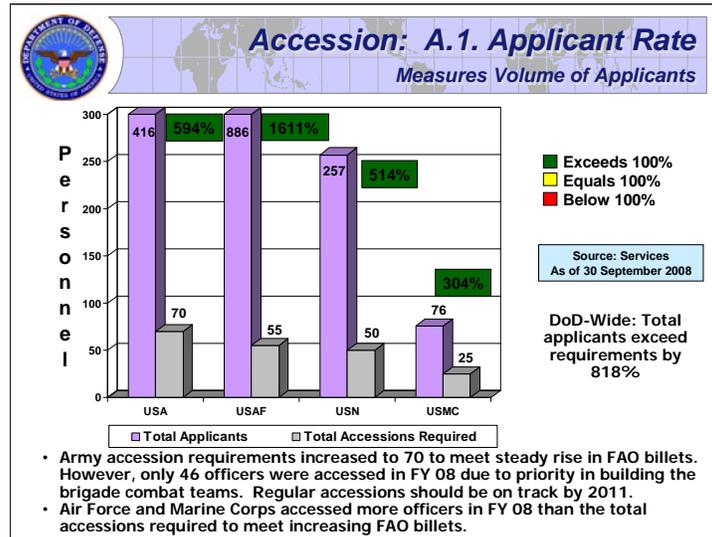


Figure 5 – FAO Accession: Applicant Rate

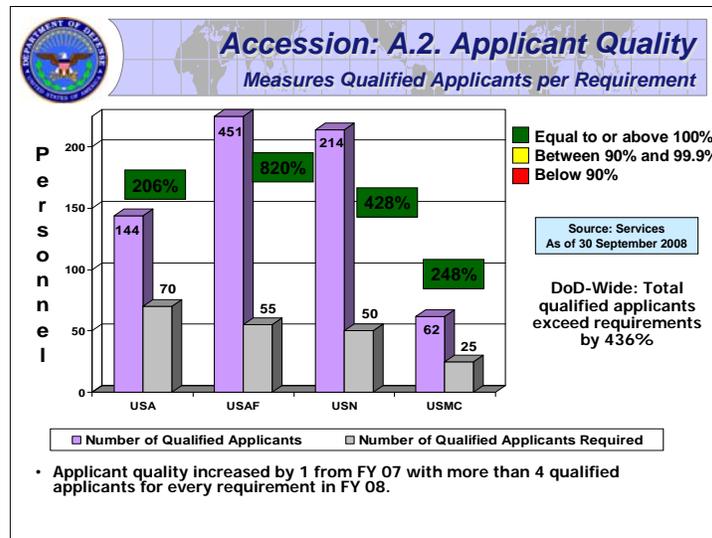


Figure 6 – FAO Accession: Applicant Quality

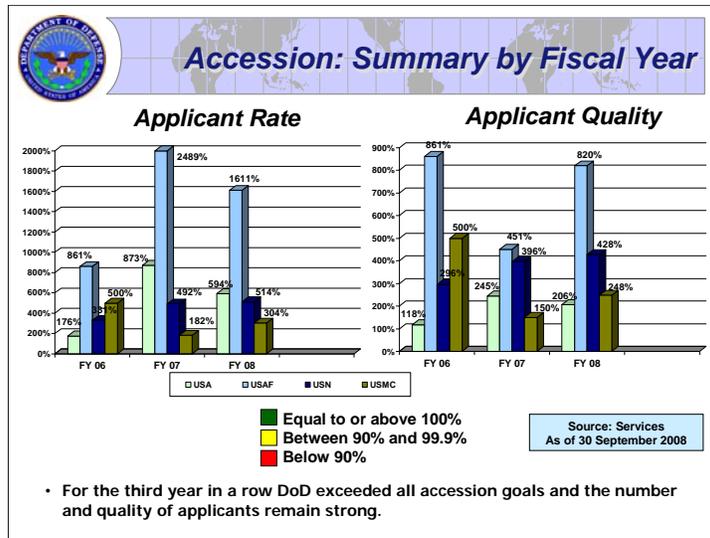


Figure 7 – FAO Accession Summary

The FAO completion of training metric is designed to measure the ability of Service training programs to successfully produce the required numbers of FAOs. Figure 8 shows the Services averaged 100 percent for training completion statistics in FY 08 indicating that the competitive selection process is ensuring candidates are capable of meeting the rigorous FAO training requirements. As Figure 9 illustrates, this is an improvement from previous years. The Air Force and Navy’s initial class of FAOs graduated in FY 08 since their respective programs were restructured in 2005; this increased their inventory of deliberately developed FAOs to 34 and 35, respectively.

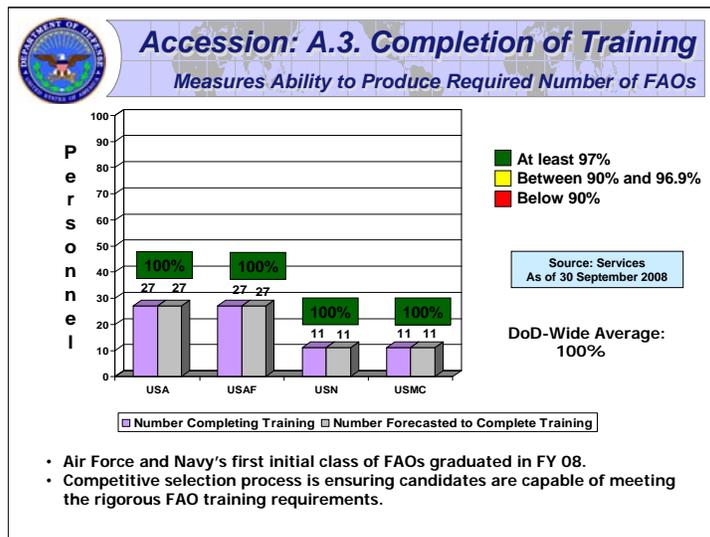


Figure 8 – FAO Accession: Training Completion

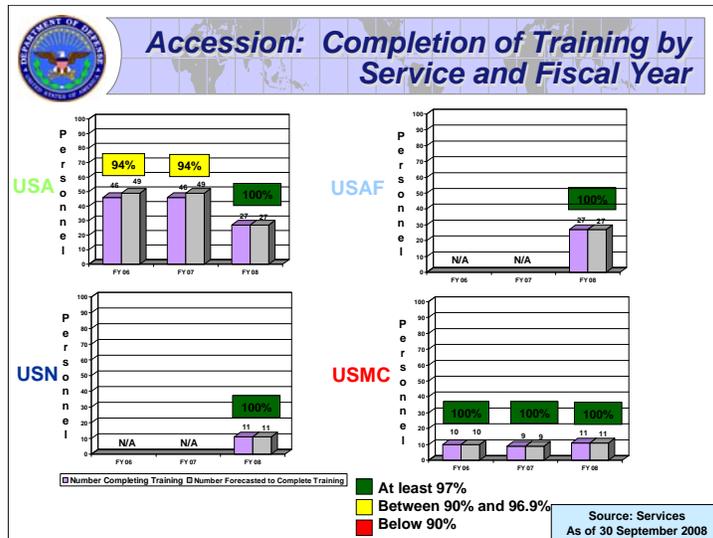


Figure 9 – FAO Accession: Training Completion by Service and Fiscal Year

**FAO Promotion & Retention.** Promotion and retention of FAOs of the highest caliber are critical to the viability of the program. The FAO promotion rate metric is designed to measure the selection rate of primary (in) zone FAOs compared to the overall Service average for that board to ensure a viable and competitive program (Figures 10-13). The FAO requirement promotion rate metric is designed to measure if FAO selections for promotion meet FAO promotion requirements (Figures 15-18). FAO promotion rates for O-5 and O-6 varied among the Services in FY 08 with the Air Force providing promotion data for the first time. The Marine Corps and the Air Force met the Department’s promotion goal while the Army and Navy’s FAO promotion rates were well below Service average for O-5 and O-6. It is interesting to note that the dual-track programs – Marine Corps and Air Force – exceeded their Service averages while the single-track programs – Army and Navy – were below their Service averages. It is too early to assign cause and effect because this is the first year all four Services provided the required FAO metrics. Nonetheless, OUSD(P&R) will continue to monitor changes and trends in this area.

The Marine Corps continues to have improved promotion rate, which it attributes to the selection of more competitive officers during accession and closer management of FAO careers. The Army’s low FAO promotion rate is due to more officers being considered in the primary zone for roughly the same number of promotion requirements. The Navy FAO promotion rates for O-5 and O-6 continue to be well below the service rate average for officers in the primary zone; however, they have met their selection requirements indicating that the Navy is promoting the number of FAOs needed to meet current and near-term requirements. The Navy is currently reviewing promotion policies and developing a way ahead to bring the in-zone selection rate to levels equal to or better than Fleet average. OUSD(P&R) will continue to carefully monitor promotion rate trends particularly for new programs such as the Navy and Air Force as their FAO programs mature.

The FAO O-5 promotion rate for Marine Corps and Air Force (83 percent and 100 percent, respectively) exceeded Service promotion rate average of 71 percent and 74 percent, respectively). This is a major accomplishment for the Marine Corps since the FAO promotion rate to O-5 has been a difficult threshold for Marine FAOs to overcome with their dual-track

program. On the other hand, the Army and Navy FAO promotion rates for O-5 in the primary zone is 81 percent and 30 percent, respectively. This is below the Army and Navy promotion average of 89 percent and 80 percent, respectively. As the Navy noted in their FY 07 report, when the Navy FAO community was established in 2006, it allowed the selection of officers that had served in FAO-type assignments but had failed to be promoted in their current community where FAO skills were not fully appreciated. These officers are now in a community where their skill sets and experience make the majority of them the best-qualified and fully qualified officers being considered for promotion. Subsequently, a larger percentage of these above-zone officers were selected for promotion. As stated earlier, the Navy is reviewing promotion policies and developing ways to ensure in-zone selection rate is equal to or better than the Service average, since this was also the case for the Navy O-6 promotion board.

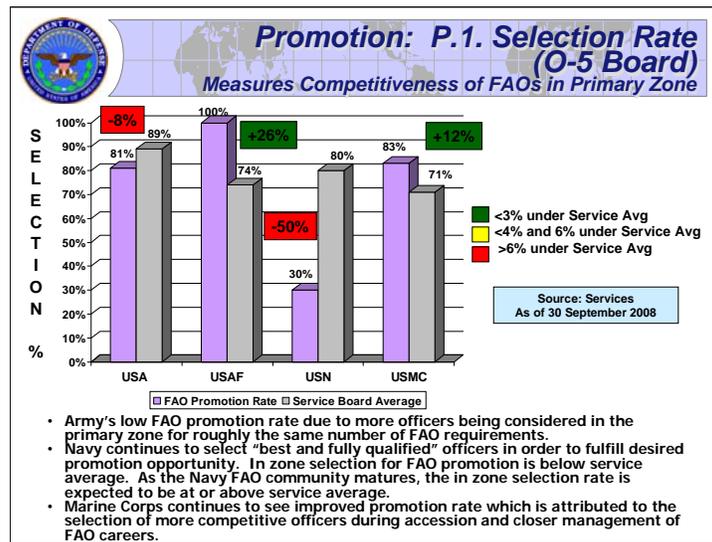


Figure 10 – FAO Promotion: O-5 Selection Rate

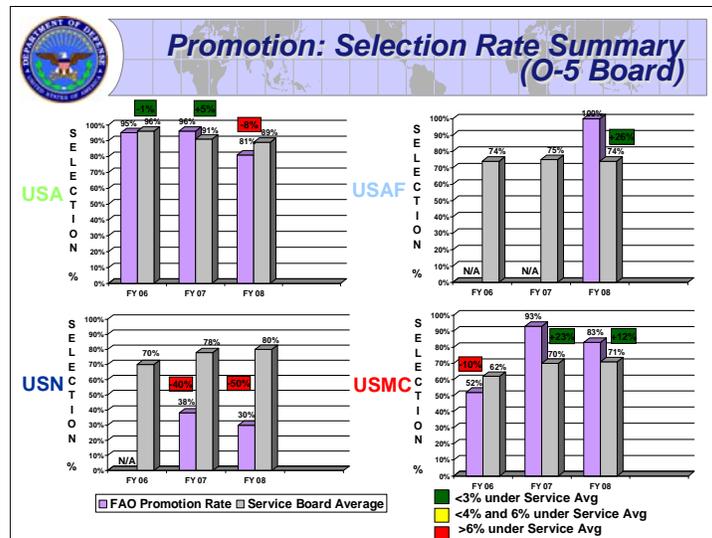


Figure 11 – FAO Promotion: O-5 Selection Rate Summary

FAO O-6 promotion rates for the Marine Corps and Air Force (50 percent and 64 percent, respectively) are near Service promotion rate averages of 51 percent and 45 percent, respectively. On the other hand, the Army and Navy FAO promotion rate for O-6 in the primary zone is 46 percent and 0 percent, respectively. This is below the Army and Navy promotion average of 54 percent and 67 percent, respectively. Again, despite a low FAO promotion rate to O-6, the Navy met its board requirements by selecting above-the-zone officers in FY 08.

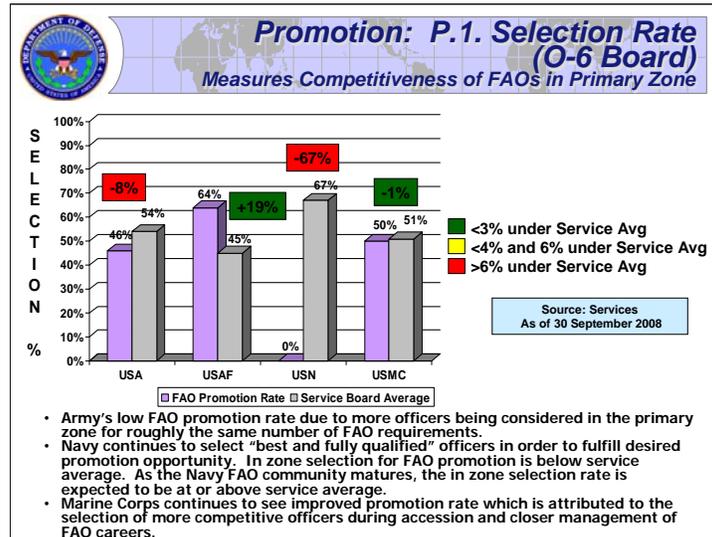


Figure 12 – FAO Promotion: O-6 Selection Rate

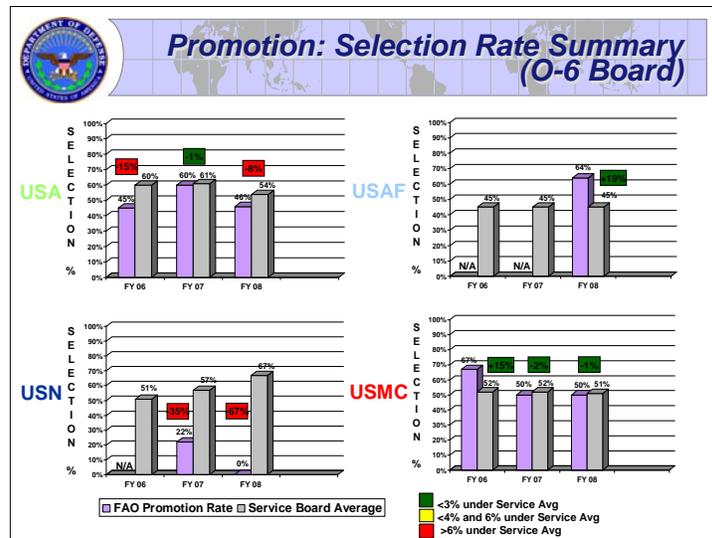
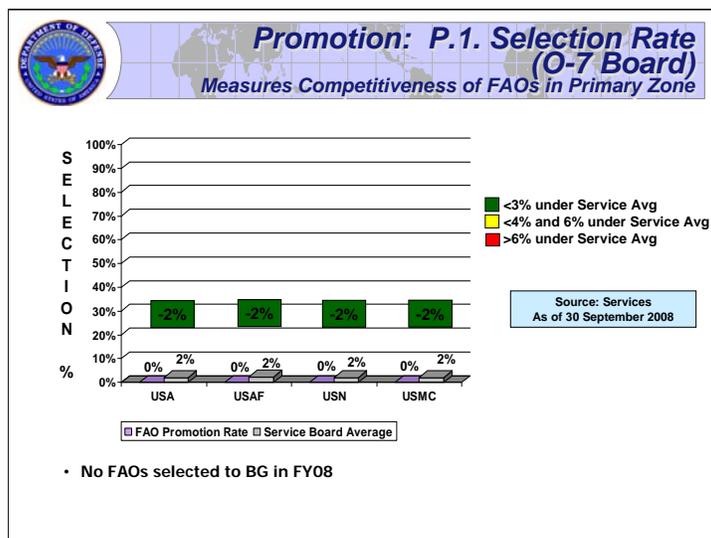


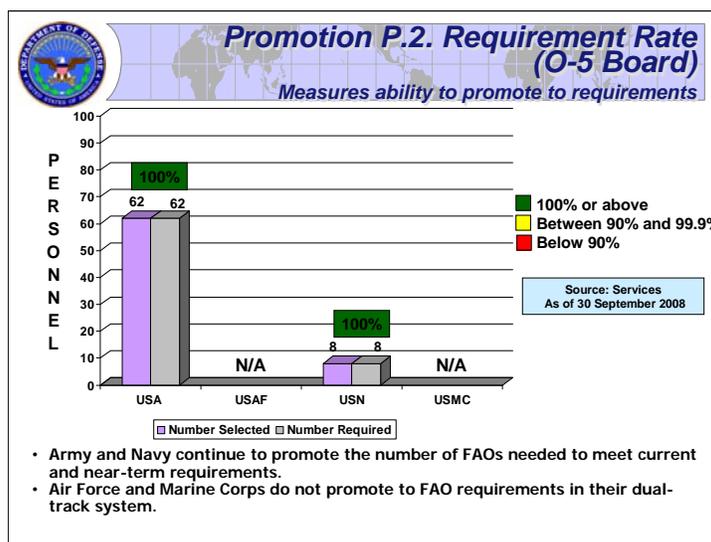
Figure 13 – FAO Promotion: O-6 Selection Rate Summary

Unfortunately, there were no FAOs selected to General/Flag officer ranks during this reporting period (Figure 14). Unlike the previous year, two Army O-6 FAOs were selected to brigadier general and are now serving as defense attachés in China and Russia.



**Figure 14 – FAO Promotion: O-7 Selection Rate**

As illustrated in Figures 15-18, the Army and Navy promoted the number of FAOs needed to meet current and near-term requirements in the ranks of O-5 and O-6. The Air Force and Marine Corps do not promote officers to meet FAO requirements in their dual-track system. Instead, officers compete for promotion against the total general officer population as a group. The Air Force noted that despite the RAS promotion rate to lieutenant colonel and colonel for both in the zone and below the zone exceeding Air Force averages, the total number of certified RAS officers promoted to these ranks did not meet their sustainment needs. This shortfall will continue until their junior, deliberately developed officers reach those stages of their careers.



**Figure 15 – FAO Promotion: O-5 Requirement Rate**

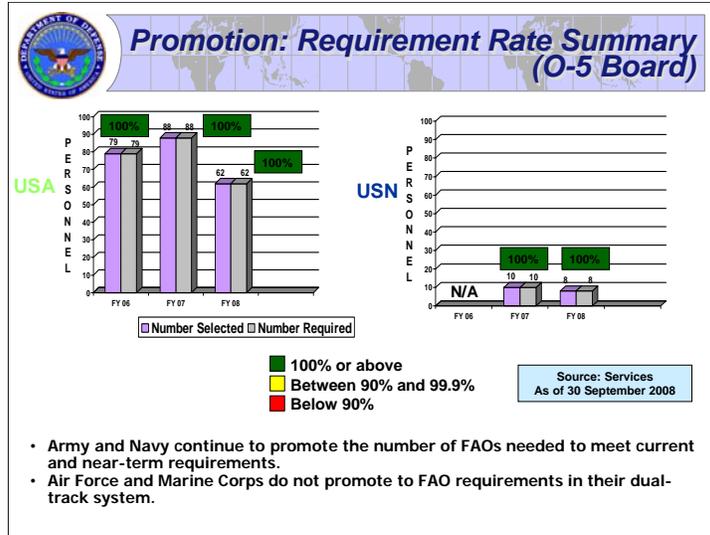


Figure 16 – FAO Promotion: O-5 Requirement Rate Summary

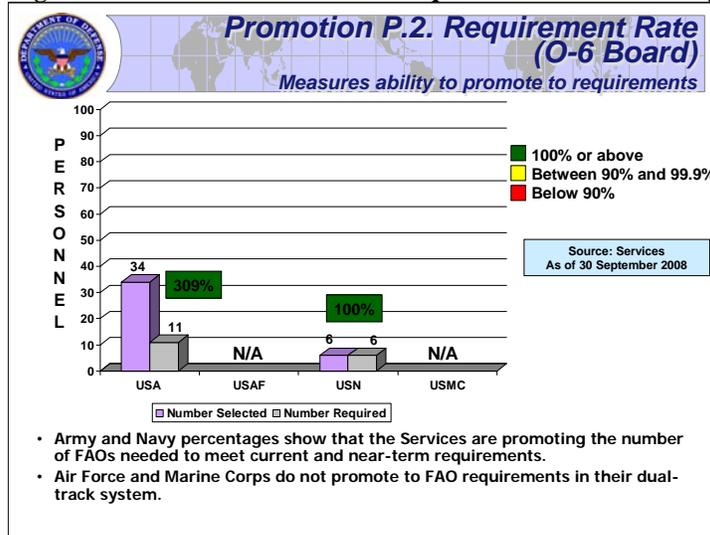


Figure 17 – FAO Promotion: O-6 Requirement Rate

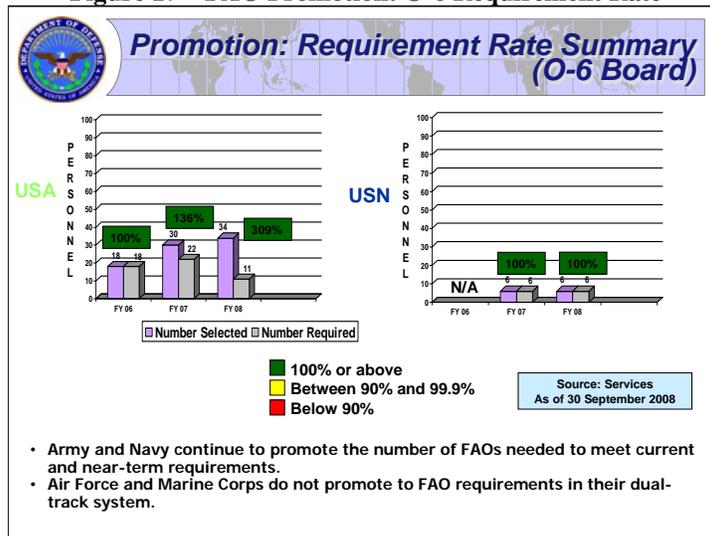


Figure 18 – FAO Promotion: O-6 Requirement Rate Summary

**FAO Attrition.** The Department’s attrition goal for the FAO program is that it is equal to or less than the Service average. This metric is designed to measure whether FAOs depart the Service at a faster rate than non-FAO officers. The metric does not focus on why an officer departed, but a number higher than the Service average will indicate that additional analysis is needed. This is the first report in which we have retention data for all the Services since the Navy and Air Force were not able to provide data previously due to the early development of their programs (Figures 19 and 20). As Figure 19 illustrates, the Services’ attrition rates are less than their Service average. Surprisingly, the Navy did not have any FAOs separate or retire in FY 08 despite low promotion rates for primary zone officers for O-5 and O-6 in the last two years. Previous data suggested that when FAO promotion rates are higher than the Service average, FAO attrition is generally lower. OUSD(P&R) will continue to monitor the correlation between promotion and retention rates and how this affects the growth of the program.

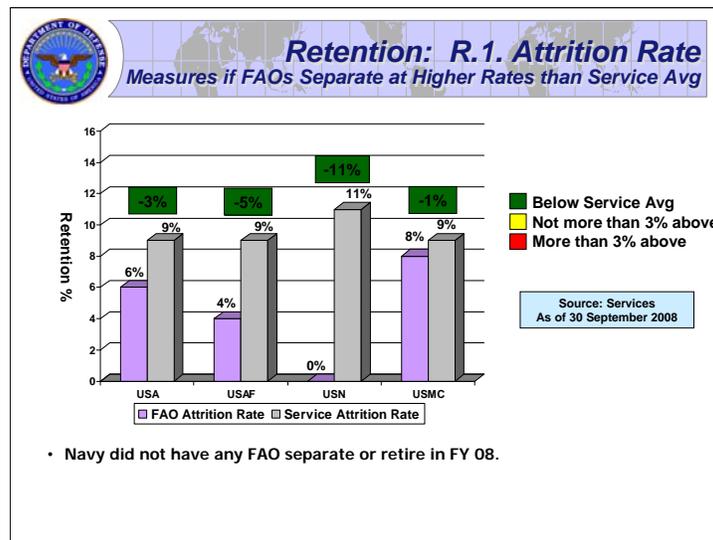


Figure 19 – FAO Retention: Attrition Rate

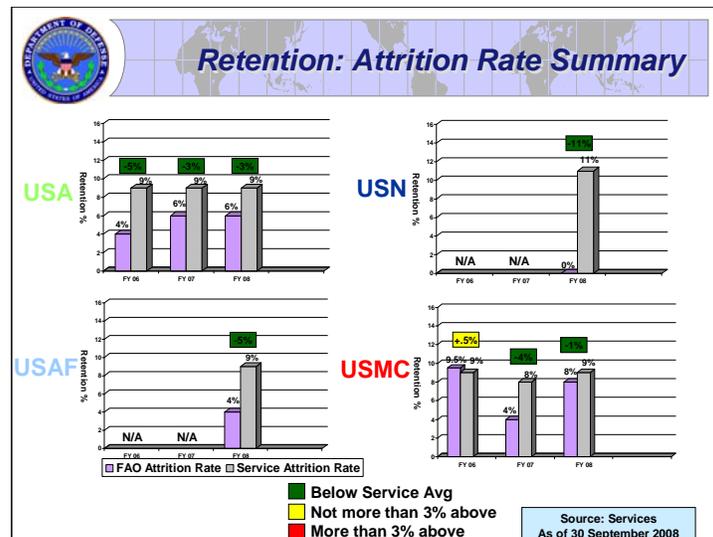


Figure 20 – FAO Retention: Attrition Rate Summary

FAO Utilization. This metric is designed to measure whether Services are filling FAO-coded billets and encourage COCOMs and others to accurately identify their FAO requirements. The Department goal is to fill at least 95 percent of all FAO-coded billets with FAO-qualified personnel. For the second year in a row, the Services did not meet the goal of at least 95 percent as shown in Figures 21-22. The Army FAO fill rate has declined during the last three years, as accessions have not kept pace with requirements. The Army is hoping to mitigate this by accessing through various means with at least as many FAOs that typically leave the service every year, in order to balance accession and attrition rates, while maintaining fill rates.

On the other hand, there has been a slight improvement of fill rates from the other Services, especially as the new programs continue to develop and build their FAO populations. However, this still falls short of meeting current requirements. Noteworthy is the Marine Corps' significant improvement in their fill rate. It was reported that several billets within the Marine Corps' Total Force Management System were inappropriately assigned as FAO-specific billets. A resulting review of all FAO billets internal to the Marine Corps identified a number of billets for which FAO skills were desired but not required. Appropriate administrative action has been taken to tighten the list of Marine FAO billets, and, with closer management of the FAO assignment process, the rate at which FAO billets are filled by qualified FAOs went up from 49 percent in FY 07 to 72 percent in FY 08. The Marine Corps expects to see further improvement in FAO utilization as FAO billet requirements are continually evaluated to better reflect both joint and internal needs.

The Air Force reported 237 FAO-coded billets that will eventually be filled with FAOs trained to the standards of the DoD FAO program. They are currently filling 208 FAO-coded billets with "best fit officers" (non-qualified FAOs) until they develop enough RAS officers to fill these billets.

In FY 06, the Navy reported a proposed requirement of 264 since they had zero FAO-coded requirements. However, in FY 08, the Navy received funding for 228 billets through FY 15. The Navy currently has 64 FAO-coded billets compared to 29 in FY 07 and plans are underway for additional billet conversions.

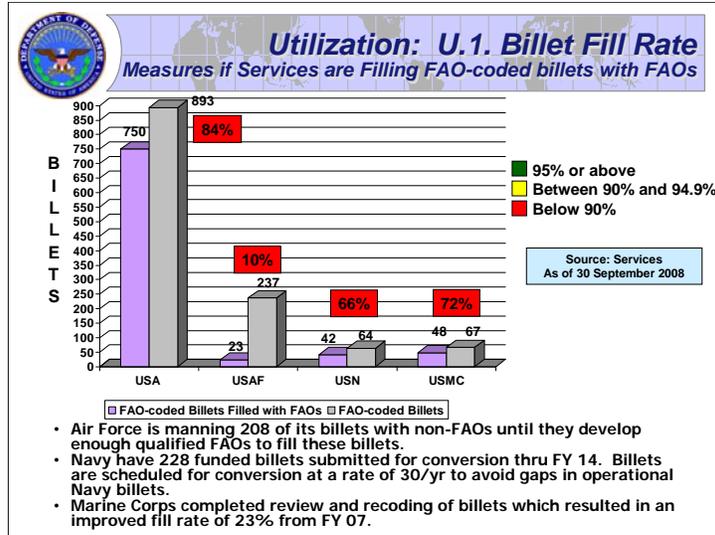


Figure 21 – FAO Utilization: Billet Fill Rate

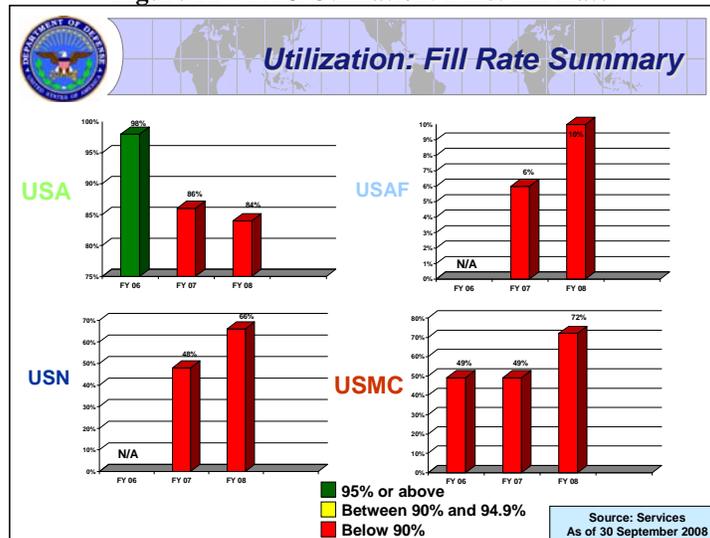


Figure 22 – FAO Utilization: Fill Rate Summary

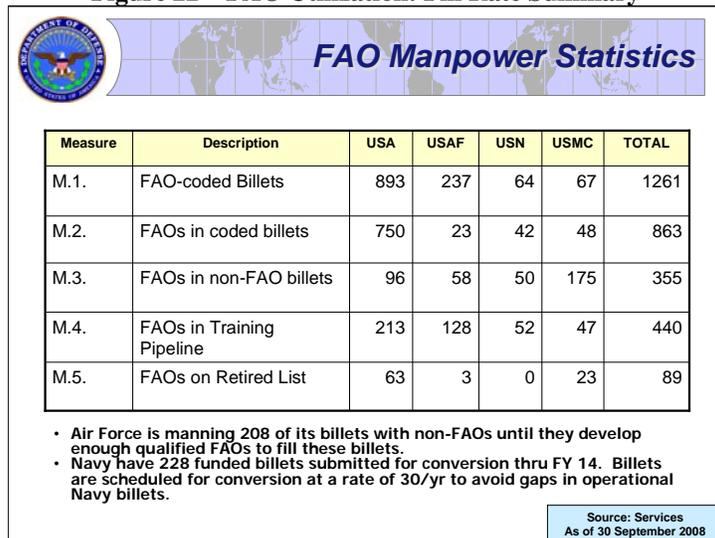
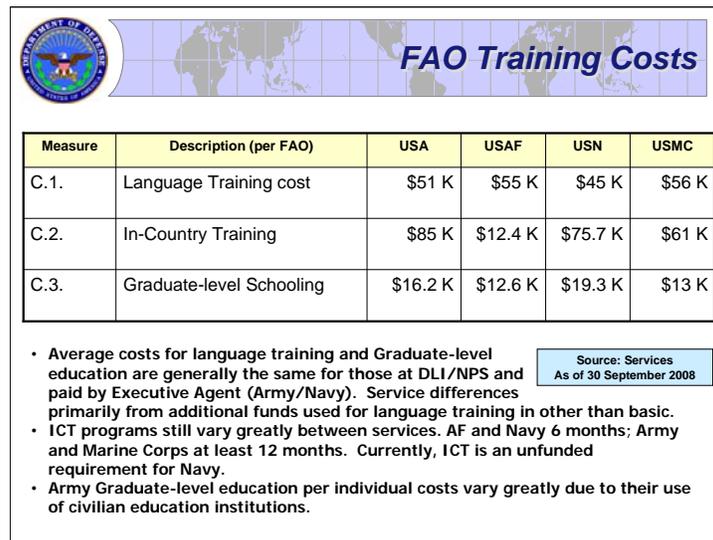


Figure 23 – FAO Manpower Statistics

FAO Training Costs. The average costs for language training and graduate-level education are generally the same for those at DLI/NPS and paid by the Executive Agent for those institutions (respectively, the Army and the Navy). The Army continues to use extensively civilian education graduate programs, so the cost per individual varies greatly, but the average cost is at the same level as the other Services. Service differences in language training costs are primarily derived from additional funds used for language sustainment training. The in-country training (ICT) program is an area where Service approaches are different, primarily in the length of time spent in the country/region. The Army and Marine Corps programs use a 12-month model, with the Army allowing up to 18 months in some cases. The Navy and Air Force use a 6-month plan. Unfortunately, the Navy and Air Force were unable to implement a 6-month in-country training program in FY 08 as required in DoDI 1315.20 due to funding constraints. The Air Force reported that command and control, manpower, logistics, contracting, and training elements are in place for a partial implementation in FY 09 and full implementation in FY 10. The Navy reported that in-country training was an unfunded requirement in FY 08. They are reviewing options to reallocate language, regional expertise, and culture funding initiatives to provide initial funding to develop an in-country training program.



**Figure 24 – FAO Training Costs**

## 10. Way Ahead

The DoD Joint FAO Program, in its fourth year of implementation, has seen growth in the number of designated FAOs as well as FAO requirements since it was reinvigorated and restructured in 2005 to better meet the Department’s need in the critical areas of language, cultural, and regional expertise. However, much work remains as the Services develop plans to address manpower shortfalls and improve respective programs to meet emerging and future joint mission requirements.

The demand for FAOs is extremely high as reflected in the steady rise in FAO requirements. The challenge is for the Services to ensure they properly identify and validate FAO requirements on a recurring basis and have an accurate picture, not only of current requirements, but also of mid-term needs, in order to fulfill their responsibilities as force providers. And with the growing

need to increase the number of FAOs within the Department – alluded to in reports written by the Defense Science Board Task Force and House of Representative Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations as well as an expressed concern from the Joint Staff and Defense Agencies – the Services need to take proactive steps now to meet the demand. Inaction by the Services could hamper the growth of the program which is a critical strategic asset needed by the Department to face the challenges of our present security environment.

Fill rate by qualified FAOs continues to be an area of concern as reported by the Services, Joint Staff, and Defense Agencies. The Services are working directly with the Joint Staff, COCOMs, and Defense Agencies in addressing this issue and in some cases, filling FAO billets with non-qualified FAOs as a short-term solution. Despite the low fill rate, the Combatant Commands and Defense Agencies have projected increases in their FAO requirements for the next six years. They recognize the value and unique skills FAOs bring to the strategic and operational environments we face today.

Besides FAO fill rate, the Reserve FAO Program continues to be a focus for the Department. The Reserve Component FAOs are a key component to the success of the overall Joint FAO Program. The Services acknowledge there is still work to be done in managing and monitoring FAO personnel in the Reserve Components.

The analysis of the metrics on FAO accession, retention, promotion, and utilization rates confirm that the measurements are useful in tracking Service progress. However, more time will be needed to develop a full picture, especially as Navy and Air Force programs mature. OUSD(P&R), in coordination with the Services, will continue to review the metrics and will update and adjust as new trends, requirements, or issues are identified.

The need is great and the demand is high for FAOs. Their contributions to our country's ability to meet its national strategic goals in a changing security environment that requires greater regional expertise and cultural awareness are recognized within the Department as well as the Interagency community. Thus, the Department is committed to ensuring the DoD Joint FAO Program meets its needs to develop FAOs with regional expertise and language proficiency ready to operate and execute defense missions across the full spectrum of operations.

## **Services, Joint Staff, and Defense Agencies' Executive Summaries**

The Annual Report is broken into three distinct parts. Part A is focused on the Military Departments and covers the issues associated with the accession, training, development and career progression and utilization of the FAO. Part B in turn looks at the users of FAOs and allows the Joint Staff, Combatant Commands, and Defense Agencies to provide input on their requirements for FAOs, the level to which these requirements are met by the Services, and any significant issues. Part C focuses on the Military Departments and records the FAO Metrics which measure program progress in the major areas of accession, promotion, retention, and utilization (analysis and review was included in the previous section under metrics). Included below are the executive summaries submitted for each section.

### **Part A. Secretaries of Military Departments Summaries**

#### **ARMY**

The Army's Foreign Area Officer Program is a remarkable success continuing to serve war fighters, and senior military and civilian leaders across all echelons; the Army FAO is acknowledged as the leader among similar programs within the Department of Defense. The Chief of Staff of the Army advocates a strong FAO program, and understands the need for a cadre of officers with sound regional, cultural and language proficiency – all critical to the Army's overall efforts. Army FAOs are accessed after successful service in Company grade leadership positions in their basic branch and are firmly grounded in the operational Army. Following accession, officers are developed through a formal program where they study a specific region, culture and language to become regional political-military experts and advisors to military and senior civilian leadership.

FAOs are carefully selected, trained, and managed within Army FA 48. The FAO training and assignment process is robust to ensure a quality cadre is available to serve in over 850 billets seeded throughout the Department of Defense, to include joint organizations, as well as interagency and multinational establishments. Although there is a significant training investment of time and money, results are equally measurable in quality. By virtue of their training and reputation, Army FAOs are credible among their peers and superiors as well as with senior U.S. government officials and international counterparts.

While the Army transforms into a CONUS-based expeditionary force, FAO Proponent constantly reviews ways to meet existing and emerging needs. In June, recognizing the value and unique skills FAOs bring to the operational and strategic environment, FAOs were granted eligibility to command Military Transition Teams (MTTs) in Iraq and Afghanistan. Also, the Chief of Staff of the Army directed a holistic review of the Army FAO program to remain relevant to an expeditionary combat ground force.

During FY 2008, FAO Proponent conducted regional conferences for all FAOs conducting In-Country Training (ICT). These conferences updated FAOs in-training, as well as FAOs serving in the region and in Washington on current Army issues and initiatives, and trends and challenges concerning the FAO profession. Conference objectives included a comprehensive

overview of strategic-level issues affecting their regions, and a mid-year review of individual training objectives. The conferences were conducted in a non-attributable atmosphere, encouraged by strong FAO participation and representation from interagency members, Army Service Component Commands and geographic combatant commands.

FAO Proponent conducted the first ever ICT conference in the former Soviet Union in Moscow, Russia in November 2007. The conference brought together Army FAOs from Europe, Eurasia and China to discuss a number of transnational security issues transcending regional boundaries. Ambassador William Burns provided the key note speech, highlighting the tremendous value FAO ICTs have on developing officers ready to hit the ground running in any United States country team worldwide. Over 40 FAOs attended the conference including a number of officers assigned to Moscow. Also attending and providing senior leadership and guidance was the Deputy Director of the Army's Strategy, Plans and Policy Directorate.

FAO Proponent supported two Foreign Area Officer Orientation Conferences (FAOOCs) at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, CA as well as one FAOOC at DLI-Washington. These conferences provide newly accessed FAOs an introduction to FA 48 and the chance to meet and hear from FAO Proponent, Army Human Resources Command and senior FAOs. The conferences were also open to and attended by FAO trainees' families as well as FAOs from the other services.

FAO Proponent also initiated strategic communications initiative not only within the FAO community, but also throughout the Army and the sister services. These included providing information presentations for the Joint Military Attaché School, regional Security Assistance Officer and Army Attaché Conferences, Defense Attaché Conferences, and joint Foreign Area Officer meetings and conferences.

## **AIR FORCE**

The Air Force Regional Affairs Strategist (RAS) program achieved a major milestone last year when the planned three-year ramp-up accessions process was completed. In 2008, the Air Force accessed the first full steady-state requirement of 55 officers. Additionally, as of September 30, 2008, portions of the first deliberately developed RAS class graduated the two-to-three year training program at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) and Defense Language Institute (DLI); the remaining officers in the inaugural class graduated by December 1, 2008. These graduates join other officers, who, by virtue of previous experience and education, or by alternate accession programs, are certified RAS officers. Their numbers increased the Air Force inventory to 81 RAS officers, with an additional 128 officers in the RAS training pipeline.

This year is also the first year the Air Force can report all the required DoD FAO metrics, from both the newly developed and the previously certified RAS officers. Despite the small pool of officers, the RAS promotion rate to lieutenant colonel, both in-the-zone and below-the-zone, exceeded Air Force averages, as did the in-the-zone rate for colonel. As anticipated, the total number of certified RAS officers promoted to these ranks did not meet our sustainment needs. This shortfall will continue until our younger, deliberately developed officers reach those stages of their careers. Until that time, the Air Force will continue to fill RAS coded lieutenant colonel

and colonel billets with best-fit officers and provide just-in-time training. Using a mix of best-fit and certified RAS officers, the Air Force has maintained a manning level of 97 percent for its 237 RAS billets. This highlights the importance we place on these critical, primarily joint, positions. Lastly, new accessions to the RAS training pipeline remained strong. There were 451 qualified applicants for 55 required accessions, a rate of more than 8 applicants for every opening.

The Air Force also made significant progress toward the implementation of its six-month in-country training program, as required by DoD. Command and control, manpower, logistics, contracting, and training elements are all on-pace for a partial implementation in 2009 and for full implementation for 2010. Our first RAS officer is currently testing the concept on a four-month immersion, with other test cases to follow.

The Air Force remains committed to the dual-track RAS system, where certified officers alternate assignments between RAS positions and those in their primary career field. This adds an additional layer of complexity to the program, but the benefits far outweigh the costs. By serving alternating assignments, RAS officers increase the relevancy and the credibility of their military bona fides in the international affairs environment. Additionally, the Air Force ensures that RAS officers can translate their regional expertise and insights into military utility. Lastly, it allows RAS officers to remain competent and competitive in their primary career field, to include command opportunities. This enhanced training should alleviate the low promotion rates experienced under the old FAO program.

Air Staff General Officers and Senior Executive Service (SES) civilians continue to oversee the implementation of the RAS Program through quarterly Senior Steering Group meetings. Air Force RAS program efforts are maturing correctly to meet DoD and Service requirements.

## **NAVY**

In an era characterized by new and diverse security challenges compounded by pervasive globalization, rapid changes in communications technology, and evolving regional demographics, the Navy Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Program is a core element in our nation's *Cooperative Strategy for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Seapower*. Consistent with the Strategy's major themes, Navy FAOs will bring enhanced knowledge of international maritime relations, cultural expertise with respect to emerging partner nations and their navies, and critically-needed skill in strategic foreign languages. As documented in the attached report, FY2008 saw focused efforts to increase overall awareness of the FAO Community within the Navy as well as provide increased opportunities for officers considering redesignating to FAO. Interest among Naval officers – both active and reserve – in becoming FAOs remains strong with an average of five applicants for every FAO quota. Similarly, the aggregate set of critical skills within the community has markedly improved. Navy FAO also answered the call to provide requirements to AFRICOM as a part of its standup. With these efforts came the realization that future growth of the FAO Community would be contingent upon ensuring that the billet base was structured to fully support the Navy's strategic objectives. To that end, the Navy began a process to refine the desired endstate of the FAO community, ensure FAO accessions, training, billet base and distribution support the endstate and develop and approve the FAO career path with milestones.

Even with all the success seen by the FAO Community, there still remain many challenges. FAO promotion rates continue to be an area that the community remains focused on. The opportunity for promotion remains at or above the fleet average and the community is meeting its requirements for promotions. The challenge is created by the high above-zone selection rate for O-5 and O-6 creating a below service average for in-zone selection. Navy is currently reviewing promotion policies and developing a way ahead to bring the in-zone selection rate to levels equal or better than Fleet average.

FY2008 was an exceptional year in the growth of this increasingly crucial officer community. Without question, the Navy Foreign Area Officer is viewed as a key enabler of a *Cooperative Strategy for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Seapower* and as a core function of the Navy's global engagement mission.

## **MARINE CORPS**

FY-08 was another strong year overall for the Marine Corps FAO program as it continued to grow and improve on a long-standing, mature foundation. Of particular note, applications for the program reached new highs in 2008 (up 50% from the previous year), fill rates for FAOs serving in FAO billets continued to improve (up nearly 50% from FY-07), and skill sustainment opportunities were developed and are moving ahead.

a. Accessions/Promotions. Heading into its second year of general expansion, the program enjoyed an increase in the number and quality of applicants even as it continued to access more officers into the FAO ranks. 76 officers applied for the 25 Study Track school seats offered, compared to the 50 who applied in 2007. Additionally, Marines with FAO designations once again saw their promotion rates remain competitive with their non-FAO peers. Although these numbers require further study to ensure that our most qualified and experienced FAOs are amongst those deemed competitive for promotion, they remain, on the surface, encouraging.

b. Utilization Rates. Of the metrics presented in last year's Annual FAO Report, one area of concern was the relatively low number of FAO-coded billets that were being filled by FAOs. It was noted that several billets within the Marine Corps' Total Force Management System were inappropriately assigned as FAO-specific billets. A resulting review of all FAO billets internal to the Marine Corps identified a number of billets for which FAO skills were desired but not required. Appropriate administrative action has been taken to tighten up the list of Marine FAO billets, and, with closer management of the FAO assignment process, the rate at which FAO billets are filled by qualified FAOs went up from 49% in FY-07 to 72% in FY-08. As FAO billet requirements are continually evaluated to better reflect both joint and internal Marine Corps needs, we expect to see further improvement in FAO utilization.

c. Skill Sustainment. As highlighted in the FY-07 report, Marine FAOs are particularly challenged, due to their dual-track career paths, to maintain their FAO skills when serving in operational, primary MOS (non-FAO) billets. In order to address this challenge, the USMC FAO program is pursuing two initiatives – one joint, the other internal – to ensure that valuable FAO skills remain sharp when not directly employed in FAO billets.

(1) The first, joint effort refers to the Joint FAO Skill Sustainment Pilot Program under development by the Naval Post Graduate School (NPS) at the direction of USD(P&R). The Marine Corps has been consulted on this project from the beginning and will remain enthusiastically engaged as the program gets off the ground, to include active participation in the Joint FAO conference scheduled for the Spring of 2009.

(2) The second, internal effort was conceived before the Joint Sustainment program was announced, and, it is believed, will complement this effort. It is a pilot program to be centered initially on Marine FAOs serving with the III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) based in Okinawa, Japan. The program will consist of language and regional expertise sustainment through two principal methods: 1) extensive use of local tutors, language labs, and on-line language maintenance programs at each duty station, and; 2) annual re-immersion opportunities for limited periods (10-14 days) in the respective countries/regions of expertise. Funding to support such service-level sustainment programs was offered through the Defense Language Office (DLO) during the past year in anticipation that it would be made available as early as 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter FY-09. If successful, it is envisioned that this pilot program will be expanded to include FAOs serving with the other two MEFs.

By and large, the Marine Corps FAO program remains strong and is moving ahead steadily to ensure its relevance and utility in meeting Marine Corps and joint service needs now and in the future.

## **Part B. Heads of DoD Components and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (for the Combatant Commands) Summaries**

### **DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (DIA)**

The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) remains the largest single user of FAOs in the DoD. While DIA's authorizations as a percentage of the Army's trained FAO population has dropped from the historic average of 40% to slightly over 35%, this is still more than all the Combatant Commands combined. While the United States Air Force (USAF) International Affairs Specialist (IAS) program has grown, the number of USAF IAS officers assigned to DIA has dropped (from 140 in September 2007 to 115 in September 2008). However, DIA has 18 of the newly trained USAF Regional Affairs Specialist (RAS) officers either in the training pipeline or already on station in the Defense Attaché System (DAS). During the same period, the number of Marine Corps FAOs assigned to DIA has increased (from 18 to 47). At present, there are 13 Navy FAOs in DIA.

All attaché billets require FAO skill sets and some level of proficiency in the principal language of the country of assignment. The same is true for select analyst and international engagement billets. Regional and host-country knowledge, an understanding of the culture and appropriate language skills are vital to the performance of officers in these assignments. For attachés, the desired language skill level is 3/3/3 (listening, reading, speaking) in the principal language, but this is normally impossible due to lack of available training time. This is compounded by the fact that from Fiscal Year 2003-2008, more than 70% of officers nominated to attend the Joint

Military Attaché School (JMAS) arrive with no proficiency in the principal language of the country of their assignment. Thus, rather than focusing on moving an experienced, language-capable FAO up to a higher level of language skill (e.g. from Limited Working Proficiency – ILR 2 to General Professional Proficiency - ILR 3), the majority of available resources must be devoted to the acquisition of the basic language qualification (ILR 2) before the officer is deployed. In addition, the time allocated for officers to attend JMAS and language training is normally insufficient for an adequate language training course before they must report to their duty station overseas. Only 33% of individuals being assigned to the DAS who need basic language acquisition training are permitted sufficient time by their parent Service to complete a normal course of language instruction, and the problem becomes worse with more difficult languages.

DIA uses the following criteria to determine which other DIA billets require FAOs:

- Does it involve significant engagement with foreign nationals of a particular region or country?
- Does it require in-depth regional or country expertise?

While the fill rate for FAOs being assigned to attaché positions remains strong, the fill rate for FAOs assigned elsewhere in DIA has been significantly lower and continues to decline.

## **DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY (DSCA)**

### **Focus Issues**

Although designation of military occupational specialty codes for personnel assigned to Security Cooperation Organizations (SCOs) in the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs) are the GCC's responsibility, DSCA plays a role in coordinating the assignment of qualified individuals to these positions. FAOs are assigned to many of these positions due to the requirements for language and regional/country experience. With the reissue of DoD Directive 5132.03, "DoD Policy and Responsibility Relating to Security Cooperation," and the implementation of the Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché (SDO/DATT) position on U.S. Embassy country teams, the requirement for FAOs tops the list of qualifications for these billets. With respect to AFRICOM, as it expands its presence within its area of responsibility, African FAOs (48J for the Army) play an increasing important role. DSCA supports AFRICOM's growth and continued, increased need for FAOs with both African and Arab/Maghreb experience and knowledge.

The security assistance/security cooperation (SA/SC) community makes effective use of FAO language skills in the field where FAOs serve in SCOs. However, DSCA does not have positions requiring any language skill in the Headquarters. Therefore, the prohibitive additional expense of attaining and maintaining 3/3/3 language capability among assigned FAOs is not justified by the manpower requirements of this organization. However, DSCA does support the continued language study and qualification by its FAOs, and recognizes that language ability is essential for FAOs serving in SCOs. Problematically, there is no formal advanced course of language study presently available to most FAOs. Sustainment language training is an individual responsibility; the Defense Language Institute has programs available for its graduates and the Army does provide Rosetta Stone software through online courses available to all Army personnel. However, it is not advanced and only reinforces what a linguist already knows.

DSCA strongly supports making the USD(P&R) Joint FAO Skill Sustainment Pilot Program permanent and encourages the continued exploration for other initiatives which will preserve these valuable, yet perishable FAO skills. This point is particularly important in assignments that require qualified FAOs, but do not use all FAO skills.

### FAO Achievements

FAOs assigned to DSCA and subordinate components are an integral part of the SA/SC community in the furtherance of U.S. national security objectives. They manage the successful implementation of SA/SC programs globally with our friends and allies in support of the DSCA mission to build relationships that promote U.S. interests, to build partner capacities for self-defense and coalition operations in the global war on terrorism, and to promote peacetime and contingency access to U.S. forces. FAOs serve as the SDO/DATT and as SA/SC officers in SCOs around the world, representing the Department of Defense, engaging partner nation senior military and defense officials in promoting mutual defense cooperation, and managing programs such as Foreign Military Sales, Foreign Military Financing, and International Military Education and Training. FAOs are essential force multipliers whose capabilities augment the strategic roles the GCCs play in their areas of responsibility.

The extensive education, training, and experience FAOs bring to DSCA enables them to quickly make contributions to DSCA's mission. Experience gained working programs in the field give FAOs the ability to make contributions from the first day. FAOs have a better understanding of essential SA/SC details, including the interplay of DoD, State, and partner nations. They combine process knowledge with an understanding of U.S. foreign policy and national security strategy to effectively apply all SA/SC tools.

At DSCA Headquarters, FAOs play a significant role in the coordination, management, and execution of SA/SC programs globally. In FY 2008, they developed, implemented, and supported SA/SC programs to meet critical requirements in key areas, such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Lebanon. Our FAOs headed a special team to address Iraqi SA/SC issues and assist in the establishment of an SCO, provided weekly briefings to senior OSD/CJCS leadership on renewed U.S. cooperation efforts supporting Lebanon, and established precedent-setting train and equip programs in Saudi Arabia to support the continued protection of vital energy sources.

In addition to the active duty FAOs, DSCA also employs a number of retired FAOs who have served overseas as security assistance officers and attaches, and on the staffs of the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs), Military Departments, and the Joint Staff. These DoD civilians bring a wealth of knowledge, providing first-hand experience in implementing and managing security/cooperation programs.

### Lessons Learned

Most FAOs assigned to DSCA continue to be Army. Although the other Services provide military personnel, the lack of FAO-type experience typically results in a steep learning curve in the political-military implications of our business and in the process issues of SA/SC. As the

FAO programs in the Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force mature, DSCA will work with them to bring their FAOs into the SA/SC community, both at the Headquarters and in the field. Coupled with their service-specific knowledge and FAO skills, they will enhance mission accomplishment and greatly lessen the learning curve associated with this business.

The knowledge base FAOs hold is a significant asset since they provide recent real-world experience that other members of this organization use. We tap into that knowledge base by promoting the free exchange of information across regions; there are no parochial interests above promoting the national interests. Our FAOs share information and problem-solving techniques, gained by in-country/regional assignments, across directorates and throughout the organization, which only improves the overall ability of DSCA to accomplish its mission.

As country program directors, our FAOs not only bring strong analytical, political-military, and language skills to the table, but they also bring a wealth of personal contacts with host nation and regional players which is critical in promoting U.S. interests. Additionally, since the FAO community is relatively small, they know their FAO counterparts in the various countries they manage, in the GCCs, on the Joint Staff, and in other government agencies. Their interpersonal and networking skills are an intangible asset to the organization.

### Significant Issues

The demand for SCOs is increasing; new offices are opening and existing offices are expanding. The increase is greatest in countries and regions affected by irregular warfare, where SA/SC programs play a vital role in building the capabilities and capacities of partner countries and regional security forces. Personnel filling SCO positions in these areas have the greatest need for language, cultural, and regional knowledge skills that are characteristics of FAOs. The result is the expanded requirement for FAOs to fill these SCO positions.

Additionally, DSCA is working with the Joint Staff to develop a surge capability for SCOs. This will enable DoD to better respond to emergent crises and contingencies requiring increased cooperation with partner countries. An effective surge capability is dependent upon personnel with the language skills and cultural understanding necessary for rapid integration into the partner country setting. Generally, the impact is an increased steady-state FAO demand and, specifically, an expanded requirement for FAOs in countries and regions affected by irregular warfare to fill SCO positions. FAOs are best suited for this requirement; demand for their use in surging SCOs will only increase.

DSCA supports the continued maturation of the FAO programs in the Navy, Marines, and Air Force, and will continue to work with the Services in making FAO positions available at the Headquarters and subordinate components. We recognize that this will take time, that the training pipeline is long, and that the FAO pool is currently small. We encourage the Services to more actively “grow” their programs to meet the increasing needs for fully qualified FAOs.

With the implementation of the SDO/DATT program now underway, the requirement for fully qualified Service FAOs will be even more critical. The majority of these positions are at the O-6 level, although there are several General/Flag Officers assigned as either SCO Chiefs or Defense Attachés. This points to the high level of attention the DoD FAO program should receive by all

Services in ensuring that they attract the most capable and motivated achievers into the program. As a primary end-use of FAOs, DSCA strongly supports the program and encourages its continued growth as the SDO/DATT combines the roles of both SCO Chief and Defense Attaché – both key positions for FAOs.

### **DEFENSE THREAT REDUCTION AGENCY (DTRA)**

Foreign Area Officers (FAOs) serve in a variety of critical assignments within the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). The FAOs are at the forefront of strategic arms verification inspection missions in Russia and the former Soviet Republics. They serve as inspection team chiefs for the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE), and also as site commanders at a continuously-manned remote monitoring facility in Votkinsk, Russia. In addition, DTRA FAOs serve to great effect as policy analysts, interagency liaison officers, and liaison officers for the Combatant Commands (COCOMs).

DTRA has branched out their FAOs to conduct new missions in support of both our COCOMs and the Global War on Terror. The DTRA FAOs now execute missions in support of various programs such as International Counter Proliferation and the Small Arms Light Weapons programs, Plutonium Production Reactor Agreement, Enhanced End Use Monitoring, and provide expertise and support to the development of the Korean Arms Verification Agency. The FAOs can also be found developing the Agency's Regional Counter Proliferation Strategy that supports the COCOMs in identifying key regions with the greatest weapons of mass destruction threat. Finally, FAOs continue to cultivate close working relationships with arms control counterparts in Canada, Germany, Korea, Russia, and the nations of the former Soviet Union.

DTRA will continue to leverage its FAO population to support the implementation of various arms control regimes. Despite a Russian moratorium on the implementation of its responsibilities under the CFE Treaty, and an added uncertainty concerning the future of START, our FAO population continues to be fully engaged. The Russian Federation has stepped up its activities under the Vienna Document (VD 99) to provide a rough equivalent to the number of inspections that used to be done under CFE and VD 99. As for START, indications are strong that some form of arms control regime will remain in place after the current treaty expiration date in December 2009. As a result, DTRA's workload for its FAO population remains largely unchanged, and we will continue to require a high fill rate of our FAO authorizations well into the foreseeable future.

Turning to new mission space requirements, DTRA will require FAOs with skill sets for new emerging areas. These areas include: sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and Southeast and Northeast Asia. As an initial first step, in FY 2009, we will recode an Army billet to a FAO Northeast Asia (48H) in response to our increased presence and activities on the Korean peninsula. In the event the situation in North Korea evolves to the point where a confidence and security building measures framework can be implemented, DTRA will require additional FAOs over and above its present authorizations, and will formulate a request for an increase of FAOs for the Agency.

## **JOINT STAFF**

This report assesses the health of the Foreign Area Officer (FAO) program within the Joint Staff and the Combatant Commands. It focuses on FAO manning requirements, identifies authorized billets and fill rates, and addresses projected changes to requirements from FY 08 through FY 15. Service reports will be sent directly to OSD and will include accession, retention, promotion, utilization, manpower statistics, and cost information.

Eight of the ten Combatant Commands have military FAOs on their staffs. For the first time, U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) identified seven billets that require foreign area expertise, but all are civilian positions. Five of the seven require language skills. U.S. Joint Forces Command has no requirements for FAOs.

Within the Joint Staff, the Intelligence Directorate (J-2), Operations Directorate (J-3) and Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate (J-5) have FAOs on their staffs. J-2 submits their report through the Defense Intelligence Agency and neither their billets nor their comments will be provided in this report.

There are a total of 421 FAO billets, including 24 that are coded as Reserve billets. The FY 08 fill rate appears to be quite healthy, because 91% of 423 billets are filled and this represents a six percent increase over FY 07. However, on closer examination, the fill rate of billets by qualified FAOs is only 82%. Central Command is the most effected with only 49% of their billets filled by qualified FAOs (Army 48 authorized with 38 assigned for 79%, and Air Force 31 authorized with 0 assigned for 0%).

Seven Combatant Commands project adding 67 new FAO billets over the next six years. The increases are distributed as follows: Army (35), Navy (26), Air Force (4), and Marines (2). Both the U.S. European Command and the Joint Staff J-3 will convert one billet to a civilian position.

The Combatant Commands and the Joint Staff recognize the value of the regional expertise and language capability that FAOs bring to mission accomplishment. FAOs are imperative to building partnership capacity and facilitating access to host nation representatives, as well as being invaluable to the planning process. The fill rate of billets by qualified FAOs, however, is an on-going concern. Plans for FAO program growth are inadequate to meet Combatant Command requirements.