

CHAPTER 23

FOREIGN AREA OFFICER SPECIALTY (Specialty Code 48)

28-1. Description of the Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Specialty. *a.* The Foreign Area Officer Specialty encompasses positions requiring foreign area expertise, language proficiency, and politico-military awareness. FAO's serve as commanders, key staff officers, attachés, and advisors in the analysis and conduct of activities having political, socioeconomic, cultural, and military impact.

b. The FAO Specialty includes the following functional areas:

- (1) Security Assistance Officer — 48A.
- (2) Psychological Operations Officer — 48B.
- (3) Attaché— 48C.
- (4) Civil Affairs Officer — 48D.
- (5) Unconventional Warfare Officer — 48E.
- (6) Civil Military Operations Officer — 48F.
- (7) Politico-Military Affairs Officer — 48G.

c. Officers in the FAO Specialty serve at the following organizational levels:

- (1) Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD).
- (2) Department of State.
- (3) Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (OJCS).
- (4) Combined, unified, and joint commands.
- (5) Department of the Army staff agencies, major commands, service schools, and related activities.
- (6) Military Assistance Advisory Groups (MAAGS), Missions, MILGROUPS, and Liaison Offices.
- (7) US Defense Attaché Offices.

d. The common, underlying dimension which provides a linkage among the skills of the FAO Specialty is politico-military awareness. FAO skills amplify and build upon the foundation the officer has gained in a primary specialty. Special Skill Identifiers (SSI) "48A" through "48G" represent the functional skills contained in the FAO Specialty, while Additional Skill Identifiers (ASI) "4A" through "4Z" are used to represent regional area skills. FAO SSI and ASI classification guidelines are contained in AR 611-101.

28-2. Role of the Foreign Area Officer. *a.* The Foreign Area officer can best be described as the Army's "Soldier-Statesman." Sensitive to the development and execution of the nation's national interests, foreign policy objectives, and the interface with military strategy, the FAO acquires comprehensive, up-to-date knowledge of the language, armed forces, geography, history, economics, politics, culture, and socio-

logical factors of a geographic region of the world as required.

b. As a commander, staff officer, or advisor, the FAO analyzes military problems as they are affected by political, economic, and sociological variables of a geographic region.

28-3. Participation. *a.* Officers managed by the Officer Personnel Management Directorate may have FAO designated as one of their specialties.

b. General qualifications for officers entering the specialty include:

(1) Possess a baccalaureate degree, preferably in a social/political science or related discipline, from an accredited college or university.

(2) Have attained a minimum score of 18 on the Defense Language Aptitude Test (DLAT) for foreign language training or have demonstrated a foreign language proficiency at the C3/R3 level.

(3) The use of FAO's in sensitive Department of Defense and Department of the Army assignments requires a high personnel security standard for officers designated in the FAO Specialty. Accordingly, each FAO designee must—

(a) Be a US citizen and eligible for TOP SECRET clearance in accordance with the provisions of AR 604-5.

(b) Be free of marital difficulty and from abnormal family ties or business complications which might divert attention from military duty. Foreign financial interests, foreign investments, and continual excessive personal indebtedness are possible causes for disqualification.

28-4. Professional Development. *a. Objective.* The professional development objective of the Foreign Area Officer Specialty is to develop a sufficient number of qualified officers to serve in Department of Defense and Department of the Army positions which require a detailed knowledge of foreign areas, language proficiency, and/or politico-military awareness.

b. Concept. Officers designated in the FAO Specialty may follow multiple professional development patterns in the acquisition of FAO skills. Regional areas of specialization are identified and awarded to specialty participants as required and appropriate. FAO Specialty training opportunities are geared to align closely with known or projected FAO requirements.

(1) The newly designated FAO attends the Foreign Area Officer Course conducted by the US

Army Institute for Military Assistance, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, as soon as practicable after specialty designation, consistent with the needs of the Army and tour stabilization guidelines.

(2) FAO professional development consists of functional or specialized training needed to perform in FAO assignments, and may include language training if required. ASI "4Z" (Area Unspecified) may be awarded to officers who have acquired a masters degree in a FAO-related discipline. ASI positions encompass politico-military functional areas such as international affairs, national security policy, US foreign policy, strategy, PSYOPS, civil affairs, or special forces operations which do not require a specific regional expertise or language proficiency. A FAO participant with ASI "4Z" may have his/her ASI changed to a regional ASI if he/she subsequently develops regional skills. A regionally qualified FAO may serve in an "Area Unspecified" position, but the reverse is not usually true. An "Area Unspecified" FAO would normally require additional area and/or language training before being assigned against a position requiring specific regional expertise.

(3) Regional Qualification.

(a) *General.* Regional qualification entails foreign language proficiency at C3/R3 level, completion of an advanced degree in a FAO-related discipline, preferably area studies, and the completion of overseas training or its equivalent. A FAO regional ASI ("4A" through "4S") is awarded by HQDA to an officer who has attained full regional qualification. Officers already possessing regional qualifications through previous training, education, or assignments may request that the appropriate regional ASI be awarded. Requests for award of a regional ASI should be forwarded to the appropriate Officer Personnel Management Directorate officer division and should contain Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) scores, academic transcripts (if not already on file), and a brief description of the qualifying assignment(s), including location(s), inclusive dates, and description of duties performed.

(b) *Graduate civil schooling.* Funded graduate-level FAO schooling is conducted in interdisciplinary area studies, since the majority of regionally validated FAO assignments require this discipline. If, however, an officer has acquired a masters degree in one of the disciplines reflected in figure 28-1, he/she meets the FAO graduate-level qualification objective. Officers who attend civilian graduate programs in area studies are encouraged to obtain the most comprehensive knowledge of their region possible within the time available. Additionally, FAO students should seek to gain a basic understanding of statistical applications in the social sciences since an increasing amount of politico-military analysis and policy development is

being accomplished using the scientific research methods employed in the social sciences.

(c) *Language training.* FAO language training may vary from six to twelve months depending upon the language studied. Language training is conducted at either the Defense Language Institute, Presidio of Monterey, California, or the Foreign Service Institute, Washington, DC. Additional advanced language training is integrated into most of the programs of instruction for oversea training. FAO officers (and spouses) are encouraged to seize every available opportunity to improve foreign language skills through participation in command language programs or available off-duty courses, since every specialty member will probably not have the opportunity for formal language training. Officers should feel free to seek guidance from Officer Personnel Management Directorate personnel managers in order to align their self-study efforts as closely as possible with realistic future Army requirements.

(d) *Overseas training.*

1. Overseas training is designed to immerse the FAO trainee in a foreign environment while he undergoes an extensive program of travel, research, and study which is tailored to the local situation. Guidance, management, and budget responsibility for overseas training is accomplished by the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence in coordination with the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans and with the US Army Military Personnel Center. Normally, the oversea training phase will be the final phase of FAO regional qualification, although in some cases officers may be programed for overseas training prior to attaining a graduate degree. Language training will usually precede oversea training unless the FAO is already language qualified. The duration of oversea training varies from one to two years depending upon the region of the world.

2. USSR area FAO trainees attend the 2-year course at the US Army Institute for Advanced Russian and East European Studies (USAIAREES), Garmisch, Germany, in lieu of overseas training. The curriculum at USAIAREES is presented in the Russian language. Short field trips are scheduled to the Soviet Union and East European countries to augment the academic curriculum.

3. Primary consideration for the very limited number of in-country training allocations goes to officers having between 5 and 15 years of commissioned service, serving in the grade of captain or major, and who have demonstrated a high potential for promotion.

4. Constructive credit for oversea training. Constructive credit may be granted for a previous or projected oversea assignment which equates to oversea

training and which has allowed the officer to develop in depth language skills and knowledge of the region. The criteria for award of constructive credit for overseas training is that the officer have served successfully in a qualifying overseas assignment for a minimum period of one year in a position requiring extensive contact with allied or indigeneous military forces and the civilian populace.

5. FAO training programs are designed to

meet Army requirements while taking into consideration the officer's personal interests, the time available, his/her potential, and his/her previous schooling and experience.

6. Professional phases and objectives for all specialties are discussed in chapter 2. Educational opportunities, both military and civilian, and illustrative assignment opportunities for the Foreign Area Officer Specialty are shown in figure 28-1.

(Locate fig. 28-1, a fold-in page, at the end of the regular size pages.)