

OPERATIONS  
SUPPORT DIRECTORATE

PRIORITY

ZOVW RUEAUSA688g 2441052

P 311200Z AUG 92

FM USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GM//ECCS//

TO VCSA WASHINGTON DC

INFO USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GM//SPACOS/ECCC//

HQ USAREUR HEIDELBERG GM//AEADC//

CG USAINSCOM FT BELVOIR VA

HQ USEUCOM LO WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS

PERSONAL FOR GENERAL REIMER, INFO GENERAL SHALIKASHVILI AND MAJOR  
GENERAL SCANLON FROM LIEUTENANT GENERAL CHELBERG  
DELIVER DURING NORMAL DUTY HOURS

REPLY TO ECCS

MSGID/SYS.RRM/ECCS//

AMPN/SUBJ: RETENTION OF FOREIGN AREA OFFICERS//

RMKS/1. DEAR GENERAL REIMER, I AM CONCERNED ABOUT THE HEMORRHAGING  
OF OUR FOREIGN AREA OFFICER POPULATION AS A RESULT OF SELECTIVE  
EARLY RETIREMENT BOARD (SERB), PROMOTION BOARD, AND PROFESSIONAL  
MILITARY EDUCATION BOARD PROCEDURES. THE MOST RECENT SERB SERIOUSLY  
DEGRADED OUR ABILITY TO FILL FUTURE POLITICAL-MILITARY STAFF,  
ATTACHE, AND SECURITY ASSISTANCE REQUIREMENTS WITH FULLY QUALIFIED,  
EXPERIENCED FAOS.

2. IN THE USEUCOM AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY, THERE IS AN INCREASING  
DEMAND FOR FAOS. IN PEACE, TIME WE REQUIRE EXPERIENCED FAOS IN  
ESTABLISHED BILLETS AS WELL AS FOR ATTACHE AND SECURITY ASSISTANCE  
OFFICES IN THE NEW EMBASSIES THROUGHOUT CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE.  
WE ALSO NEED EXPERIENCED FAOS AS ADVISORS ON HUMANITARIAN AID  
MISSIONS, TO LEAD OUR INCREASING MILITARY-TO-MILITARY CONTACTS AND  
TO OVERSEE THE VERIFICATION OF ARMS CONTROL TREATIES. IN CRISES,  
FAOS ALSO ASSIST PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS AND SUPPORT NONCOMBATANT  
EVACUATION ORDER OPERATIONS.

3. AS IS CLEAR FROM OUR SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS IN TIME AND MONEY  
TO DEVELOP THEIR EXPERTISE, THERE IS NO SHORTCUT TO TRAINING A  
QUALIFIED FAO. THE QUALITY OF THOSE OFFICERS WE ARE ASSIGNING TO  
THIS CRITICAL FIELD IS INDICATED BY A PROMOTION RATE TO MAJOR 20%  
ABOVE THE ARMY AVERAGE. HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF THE LENGTHY TRAINING  
AND UTILIZATION ASSIGNMENTS TO MAKE THEM USEFUL FAOS, THEY BECOME  
STRANGERS TO THEIR BASIC BRANCH. THESE SAME HIGHLY-QUALIFIED YOUNG  
OFFICERS ARE SELECTED FOR RESIDENT CGSC ABOUT 10% BELOW THE ARMY  
AVERAGE. AS YOU WELL KNOW, MANY MISS THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE AS  
S-3/XO, MAKING THEM NON-COMPETITIVE FOR COMMAND. THIS REDUCES THEIR  
CHANCES FOR PROMOTION TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL AND COLONEL AND  
SELECTION FOR THE WAR COLLEGE. BUT PROMOTION STATISTICS ALONE ARE  
MISLEADING, SINCE OFFICERS SELECTED FOR PROMOTION IN THEIR BASIC  
BRANCH CAN ALSO COUNT AS A FAO PROMOTION, EVEN IF THEY HAVE NOT  
SERVED AS A FAO IN A DECADE.

4. FAOS AT THE MID-FIELD GRADE LEVEL ARE APPLYING FOR THE VSI/SSB  
AS THEY SEE THE RESULTS OF PROMOTION AND SERB BOARDS. TWENTY  
PERCENT OF THE LAST CLASS AT THE US ARMY RUSSIAN INSTITUTE TOOK THIS  
ROUTE -- AND THEIR APPLICATIONS WERE ACCEPTED) FIVE YEARS OF  
TRAINING# COSTING SOMETIMES UP TO HALF A MILLION DOLLARS LEFT THE  
ARMY WITH EACH OF THESE OFFICERS. OUR NATION CANNOT AFFORD TO LOSE  
THE CRITICAL SKILLS THEY HAVE DEVELOPED.

5. A WELL-TRAINED, EXPERIENCED FAO SERVING IN A CRITICAL ASSIGNMENT  
ABROAD OR ON A MACOM STAFF HAS A FAR GREATER IMPACT ON IMPLEMENTING  
OUR NATIONAL POLICY THAN HIS COUNTERPART SERVING AS A BATTALION OR  
BRIGADE COMMANDER. YET THE FAO IS OFTEN PASSED OVER AND SERBED  
WHILE THE COMMANDER IS PROMOTED AND RETAINED. GIVEN THE GROWING  
REQUIREMENT FOR FAOS, I THINK STEPS MUST BE TAKEN TO ENSURE WE  
CORRECT THE PROBLEM.

6. WE MUST RETAIN QUALIFIED, EXPERIENCED FAOS, ENCOURAGE YOUNG  
OFFICERS ENTERING THE FAO FIELD TO CONCENTRATE ON THE SKILLS WE

ACTION DACS/GEN REIMER/(1)  
INFO SCB REVIEW(1)

(M,C)

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NEED, AND REPAIR THE DAMAGE DONE BY THE LAST SERB. TO THESE ENDS,  
I PROPOSE THE FOLLOWING:

- CONSIDER SETTING A SERB CEILING FOR FAOS BASED ON PREDICTED NEEDS;
- CAREFULLY SCRUTINIZE REQUESTS BY QUALIFIED FAOS FOR VSI/SSB;
- COUNT ONLY QUALIFIED, EXPERIENCED FAOS IN MEETING PROMOTION BOARD FLOORS;
- MAKE FAO EITHER A NON-ACCESSION BRANCH (LIKE SPECIAL FORCES) OR A SINGLE-TRACK CAREER FIELD AT THE MID-FIELD GRADE LEVEL (LIKE ARMY ACQUISITION CORPS); AND
- CONVENE A PANEL TO REVIEW THE RECORDS OF ALL FAOS SELECTED BY THE LAST SERB AND CONSIDER RECALLING THE MOST QUALIFIED TO ACTIVE DUTY TO MEET OUR EXPANDING REQUIREMENTS.

7. AS WE REDUCE OUR FORWARD-DEPLOYED FORCES, THE CRITICAL ROLE OF THE FAO IN EXECUTING THE NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY OF FORWARD PRESENCE CANNOT BE OVERSTATED. I ASK YOUR ASSISTANCE IN PROTECTING THIS CRITICAL ASSET DURING THIS PERIOD OF GLOBAL CHANGE AND UNCERTAINTY. VERY RESPECTFULLY, BOB. BT