

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
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JUN 8 2007

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 2006 Annual Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Program Review and Report

I am forwarding to you the Department of Defense FY 2006 Annual Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Program Review and Report. This report reflects the great effort and progress made by the Services in developing FAOs that possess a unique combination of strategic focus, graduate-level education, foreign language proficiency, and broad regional expertise to meet the Department's needs.

The annual report examines 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). Over 1,400 officers currently hold the FAO designation, and the Services plan to produce almost 1,000 new FAOs by 2012. The recognized value of FAOs is exemplified by the COCOM's requested increase in total authorized FAO coded billets – up by 29 percent over the initial report.

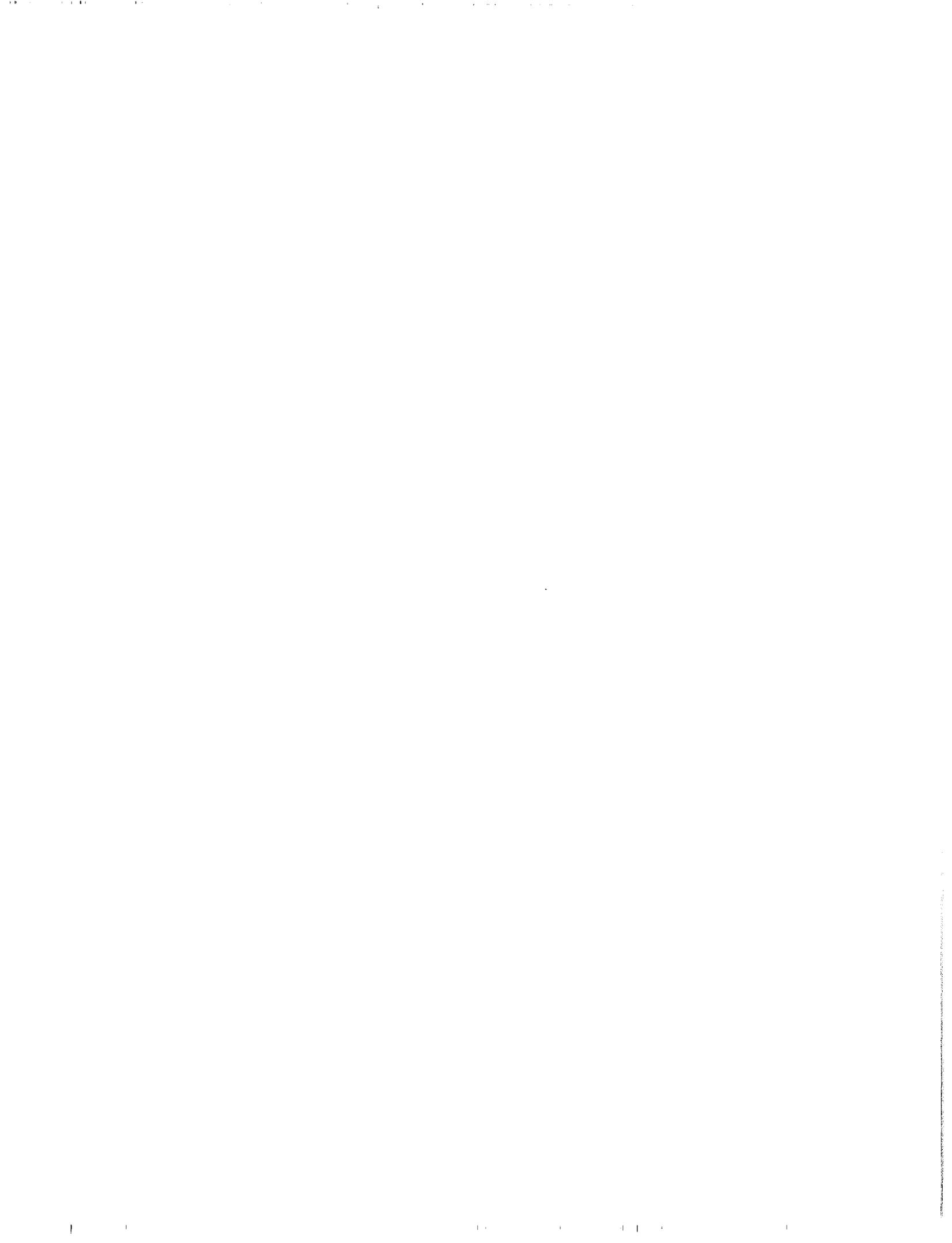
It is only through your continued efforts that the Department's FAO program continues to improve and grow. Thank you for your attention and support to this important program.

David S. C. Chu

Cc:

COMMANDER, USEUCOM/SACEUR  
COMMANDER, USNORTHCOM  
COMMANDER, USSOCOM  
COMMANDER, USSTRATCOM  
COMMANDER, USTRANSCOM  
COMMANDER, USPACOM  
COMMANDER, USSOUTHCOM  
COMMANDER, USJFCOM  
COMMANDER, USCENTCOM

07-1172



# The Defense Language Office



## FY 2006 DoD Foreign Area Officer Annual Review and Report



## **Department of Defense 2006 Annual Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Report**

This report provides the Department of Defense 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 Annual FAO Reports. The annual review and report process look 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 reports on the joint FAO Program for the Department. The initial reports were prepared and submitted in February 2006.

DoDD 1315.17 also required Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel & Readiness (USD(P&R))) to establish standard metrics and monitor FAO accession, retention, and promotion rates. 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, retention, and promotion. Initial data was submitted by the Services in May 2006, with data as of 31 March 2006. This data was used to form a baseline of information and begin the process of tracking and monitoring FAO utilization and career progression to identify trends and examine impacts of alternative practices among the Service programs.

The 2006 annual review and reports combine both efforts into a single report process and puts them on the same timeline (all data and report content is a snap shot as of September 2006) for efficiency and standardization. Due to this, the FY06 report will be used as the baseline for future reporting comparisons.

### **Executive Summary**

The FAO is the Department's uniformed expert that possesses a unique combination of strategic focus, regional expertise, cultural awareness, and foreign language proficiency. FAOs are managed to maximize their service in OSD, Joint, Combatant Command, and Service staffs and in select Defense Agencies. The restructuring and reinvigoration that began in 2005 has resulted in two programs with mature policies and experiences (Army and Marine Corps), and two programs with limited historical data and personnel (Navy and Air Force). However, all are now building new FAOs with a set of common training guidelines, developmental experiences, language, cultural, and regional expertise standards.

The Army and Navy have a single-track approach to FAO career management and the Air Force and Marine Corps have a dual-track approach. Initiatives within the Army and Marine Corps' mature programs have made their different approaches work. The Air Force and Navy, as they stand up their fledging programs, are moving to meet the Department's needs for FAOs. The Air Force faces the greatest challenges and its progress has been the slowest.

The Joint FAO program continues to improve and grow. Over 1,400 officers currently hold the FAO designation, and the Services plan to recruit and train more than 165 a year, with almost 1,000 new FAOs entering the program by 2012.

Getting the requirements and validation process right is the single biggest challenge facing the FAO program and will be a area of primary effort in FY07-08. Work on this has already begun and the Joint Staff report notes that four out of seven combatant commands have projected FAO increases for FY 07 – FY 13. Combatant commands have requested an increase of 29 percent in total authorized FAO coded billets.

The Department exceeded all FAO accession goals and the number and quality of FAO applicants is strong. Applicants across all Services exceed requirements by 414 percent. Approximately 95 percent met the minimum FAO accession qualifications, giving FAO selection panels more than three (3) qualified applicants per requirement. The training completion rate for selected FAOs is 95 percent (for Army and Marine Corps), indicating that the competitive selection process identifies quality candidates.

Promotion rates in the Army met the goal for O-5 FAO promotions. The O-6 rate was 15 percent below Service average, but apparently did not impact retention. The retention rate was 5 percent higher for Army FAOs than the Service average. The Marine Corps FAO promotion rate to O-6 exceeded the Service average by 13 percent, but the O-5 rate was below the average by 10 percent. The attrition rate for USMC FAOs was equal to the Service average.

## **1. Program Implementation**

The DoD FAO Programs, under the oversight of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)), has used the guidance and policies in DoD Directive (DoDD) 1315.17, *Military Department Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Programs*, to reinvigorate and redirect efforts 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. FAOs are managed to maximize their service in OSD, Joint, Combatant Command, and Service staffs and in select Defense Agencies.

The changes made through the DoDD 1315.17 will be further institutionalized with the publishing of the DoD Instruction (DoDI) on FAO Programs, currently in the formal coordination phase. This instruction will implement policies, assign responsibilities, establish timelines, and prescribe procedures directed in the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap and the DoDD 1315.17. It will also establish procedures to access, develop, retain, motivate, and manage all FAOs within the Department of Defense, and provide the report format, procedures, and reporting instructions for an Annual Report on DoD FAO Programs.

The review of Service reporting and their progress in transforming the FAO programs show that they are meeting their responsibilities in developing comparable programs, building requirements, and manning the force with trained FAOs in accordance with the policies and guidance in the DoDD 1315.17. They have completed the structural changes that were outlined in the Service implementation plans and discussed in the initial FAO report (March 2006) to meet the requirements of the Directive and the Joint FAO Program. This resulted in the modification of existing programs for the Army and Marine Corps, and the establishment of new FAO programs for the Navy and the Air Force. Therefore, the Department has two programs with mature policies and experiences (Army and Marine Corps), and two programs with limited historical data and personnel (Navy and Air Force). However, all are now building new FAOs with a set of common training guidelines, developmental experiences, language, cultural, and regional expertise standards. Over 1,400 officers currently hold the FAO designation, and the Services plan to recruit and train more than 165 a year, with almost 1,000 new FAOs entering the program by 2012 (See Figure 1).

## **2. Career Structure**

As described in their Annual Reports, the Army and Navy have a single-track approach to FAO career management and 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 impact and differences of the two tracks is 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 other career field. On the other hand, their opportunities to remain

well-grounded in their basic military skill or designation may be greater. There is no clear indication at this time as to which is better, but this is an area to watch for the Department.

The Army has had the most experience with the single and dual-track systems, having originally developed their program as a dual-track, but later changing over to a single-track system. Since the inception of the single-track system, Army FAOs have become better experts on their regions of expertise due to more in-country time and service in repetitive FAO assignments. However, the Army identified a growing “Green Gap” in which these expert FAOs find challenges in maintaining their Army operational focus due to this repetitive service in strategic level positions. In order to alleviate these concerns, the Army launched a number of initiatives to build “Pentathletes” – capable of handling multiple complex tasks across the entire spectrum of conflict. This has included changes in military education and inclusion of FAOs within the Army Service Component Command (ASCC) and other lower-level staffs.

The Navy approach mirrors the Army as a single-track career field. Predominately, Navy FAOs will serve in repetitive assignments at the Fleet Headquarters, NCC and COCOM staffs. Acting independently when required, Navy FAOs will augment forward deployed Joint Task Forces, Expeditionary Strike and Carrier Strike Group Staffs, American embassies, and coalition partners. Additionally, as part of the new Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC), FAOs will provide a core TSC capability available to augment Joint and Navy Task forces. When not assigned to operational tours previously described, Navy FAOs will be assigned as attachés, directors, and action officers within the Offices of Defense Cooperation (ODC), Interagency Liaison Offices, the Joint Staff, and Navy staff (typically assigned to the Plans, Policy and Operations Directorates) as well as the Navy International Programs Office (NIPO).

The Marine Corps approach to dual-tracking appears to be working with its increased emphasis and management of Marine FAOs to ensure career paths and promotions are only positively effected by the demands of FAO program. As noted in their review, “the Dual Track career path for FAOs is manageable, but it is critical to select officers at exactly the right point in their careers in order to ensure competitiveness for promotion and command. This will also facilitate multiple utilization tour opportunities.”

The Air Force faces the biggest challenges with their new program due to their choice of dual-tracking and issues associated with rated officers (personnel who are trained and qualified in an aircraft and have requirements to maintain currency). This has presented a challenge because rated staff officers are very carefully managed due to overwhelming demand, and relatively limited supply. The Air Force report notes that the recent International Affairs Specialist (IAS) program initiative has increased the rated positions in the program to 118, facilitating a greater utilization of rated IAS officers.

**As of: 30 SEP 2006 (Data from the Services FY06 Annual FAO Report)**

SERVICE	BASELINE		Current		Projected Accessions						Total
	Reqs FY05	Population FY05	Reqs FY06	Population FY06	FY07	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	
USA	739	1015	778	1083	46	48	46	48	47	47	282
USN*	255	0	264	74	50	50	50	50	50	50	300
USAF	169	0	228	29	41	50	49	49	50	50	289
USMC	64	149	67	228	34	18	18	18	18	18	124
Total	1227	1164	1337	1414	171	166	163	165	165	165	995

Planned Accessions FY07 - FY12      171   337   500   665   830   995

**NOTES:**

Baseline Data from Initial FAO Reports (March 2006), with data as of Dec 2005

Accessions are those needed to maintain the required strength of each Service program. Attrition is taken into account.

\* Navy Requirements are all proposed numbers - currently has 0 FAO requirements coded.

Of the 74 Navy FAOs, 12 are fully qualified, 17 entered training in FY06, and 23 will enter in FY07

28 of the USAF FAOs listed under FY06 are in training.

In addition to projected accessions, USMC brings on average 25 additional personnel into the experience track each year.

USMC annual accession for FY07 and on represent an increase from 10 a year, done in order to meet increasing requirements

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

**3. Requirements/Utilization**

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 three and a half years, it is imperative that the Services have an accurate picture, not only of current requirements, but also of mid-term needs (e.g., out to six years), in order to fulfill their responsibilities as force providers. Good progress has been made in refining requirements over this report period and is reflected in the greater accuracy and clarity of the submitted reports. Requirements for FAOs have grown from 972 in the baseline reporting period to 1,073 in this report. These numbers do not include Navy's proposed (but not yet re-coded) requirements of 264 billets – with another 100 that will be in training at any given time.

The Joint Staff report identifies a requirements and utilization issue and changes needed in the requirements for FAOs on the Joint Staff and in the COCOMs. 77 percent of Combatant Command and Joint Staff authorized FAO coded billets are filled by Army officers, 20 percent by Air Force officers, 2 percent by Marine Corps officers and 1 percent by Navy officers. The significant difference between Services is due to the Army having the largest and most mature FAO program, but the proper distribution and growth of the requirements for the new programs continues to be an area of emphasis for the Department. Work on this has already begun and the Joint Staff report notes that four out of seven combatant commands have projected FAO increases for FY 07 – FY 13. Combatant commands have requested an increase of 29 percent in total authorized FAO coded billets. The projected increase would boost Air Force authorized FAO coded billets by 47 percent and Navy 540 percent (increased from 1 billet to 30 billets). Getting the requirements and validation process right is the single biggest challenge facing the FAO program and will be the primary area of effort in FY07-08.

#### **4. Advancement**

The DoDD 1315.17 directs the Secretaries of the Military Departments to design “FAO programs to provide opportunity for promotion into the General/Flag officer ranks.” In order to achieve this, FAOs must first be competitive at the O-5 and O-6 levels. Several aspects of FAO careers will help contribute to making this a reality. Most FAO duty positions are in the Joint arena, where promotion rates are monitored to ensure the competitiveness of Joint Duty Officers compared to their Service contemporaries. The Joint Staff routinely reviews the results of Service promotion boards to ensure Joint duty is not a hindrance to promotion. While not all FAOs will qualify as Joint Duty Officers, repeated Joint assignments will increase the likelihood that they will be so designated. The Goldwater-Nichols legislation that mandated this review of joint duty promotion rates also directed that General and Flag officers have attended a joint training course and had at least one previous Joint assignment before promotion to O-7. Many FAOs will meet this requirement through their routine career assignments.

The Annual Reports note a number of Service and Joint General and Flag Officer billets that would be logical career progressions for FAOs. These positions include those Defense Attaché positions already coded for a General/Flag Officer (e.g., Russia, China, and the UK), as well as positions in Defense Agencies, Services, Combatant Commands, and the Joint Staff that require considerable political-military acumen (e.g., in the intelligence, international affairs, security assistance, and strategic plans and policy areas). The goal is to identify billets that would benefit from a General/Flag officer with FAO skills and have the assignments rotate among the Services to allow equal opportunity and the time needed to identify, train, and promote a FAO to General/Flag Officer. Currently, there are at least fifteen General/Flag Officers on duty in DoD who have extensive FAO experience. However, during this report period no General/Flag Officers were selected from the FAO ranks.

#### **5. Incentives**

There are many incentives available to FAOs which make the program desirable initially and assist in retaining FAOs once in the program. The initial training for all FAOs is cited as a major inducement to attract the highest quality candidates to the FAO program. A fully funded graduate degree, learning a language at the Defense Language Institute for Foreign Language Center, and in-country immersion training are the premier incentives for FAOs to join the program. The recent improvement in career and promotion opportunities also encourage potential FAOs to select this career field.

Currently, there is only one monetary incentive provided to FAOs. The Foreign Language Proficiency Bonus (FLPB) program is designed to provide incentives which reward the acquisition, maintenance, and enhancement of foreign language skills at or above required proficiency levels. Based on recent revisions to the FLPB policy, FAOs are eligible to qualify for up to \$1,000 per month based on the number of languages spoken and proficiency levels. The Services have not identified a requirement to create any additional financial incentives for FAOs. DoD will continue to monitor Service FAO programs through Annual Reports and the application of metrics. Additional incentives for FAOs can be developed if deemed necessary.

## **6. Training**

Each of the Services recognize the common set of skills needed to become a qualified FAO. The basic requirement of language at a professional level, a post-graduate degree in applicable regional studies, and in-country experience in advance of assignment are found in each program and required in the DoD Joint FAO Program. This ensures that regardless of Service, a FAO will have common core competencies and capabilities. FAOs generally receive their language training from the Defense Language Institute (either in Monterrey or Washington). Graduate-level education is obtained at the Naval Postgraduate School for the Navy, Marine Corp, and Air Force while the Army continues to focus on civilian universities for graduate-level education. The greatest difference is in the length of in-country experience requirements of the programs, with the Army and Marine Corps providing 12 months (or more), the Navy 6 months, and the Air Force currently only one to two months. All are working to include related programs in-country (Program Exchange Positions, Foreign Professional Military Education, Olmsted/Mansfield Programs) that increase the time in-country, in recognition of the importance of the immersion training on language skills and experience in the region.

Following the initial 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 the 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 and in an Office of Defense Cooperation or Military Assistance Group. 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, 80 percent of nominees for the Joint Military Attaché School arrive for attaché training with no proficiency in the principal language of the country to which they are being assigned. The improvement in the Joint FAO program and its expansion to the Navy and Air Force will directly reduce this as FAOs are built to the new standards.

## **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 FAOs training is the Army’s FAO Orientation Course and Regional Conferences. These programs provides the newly selected FAO with an overview and understanding of the FAO program, career field, and regional/country-specific information. The Army opened the program to all Service FAOs and hosted the first Joint Regional Conference in March 2006. The first Joint FAO Orientation Course was held at the DLIFLC in January 2007 and included over 60 new FAOs from all Services.

Although there is a significant amount of inter-military coordination on an informal basis, cooperation and successes are captured formally in a quarterly 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 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. FAO Metrics (Data as of September 30, 2006)

DoDD 1315.17 requires the USD(P&R) to, "establish standard metrics and monitor FAO accession, retention, and promotion rates." The initial set of eight metrics was 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 requirements in the areas of accession, retention, and promotion. The initial data was submitted by the Services in May 2006, with data as of March 31, 2006. This data was used to form a baseline of information and begin the process of tracking and monitoring FAO utilization and career progression to identify trends and examine impacts of alternative practices among the Service programs. However, the period of the initial report crossed fiscal years, which caused problems in comparative analysis. The fiscal Year 2006 annual review and report puts everything on the same timeline (all data and report content is a snap shot as of September 2006) for efficiency and standardization. Due to this, the FY06 report will be used as the baseline for future reporting comparisons.

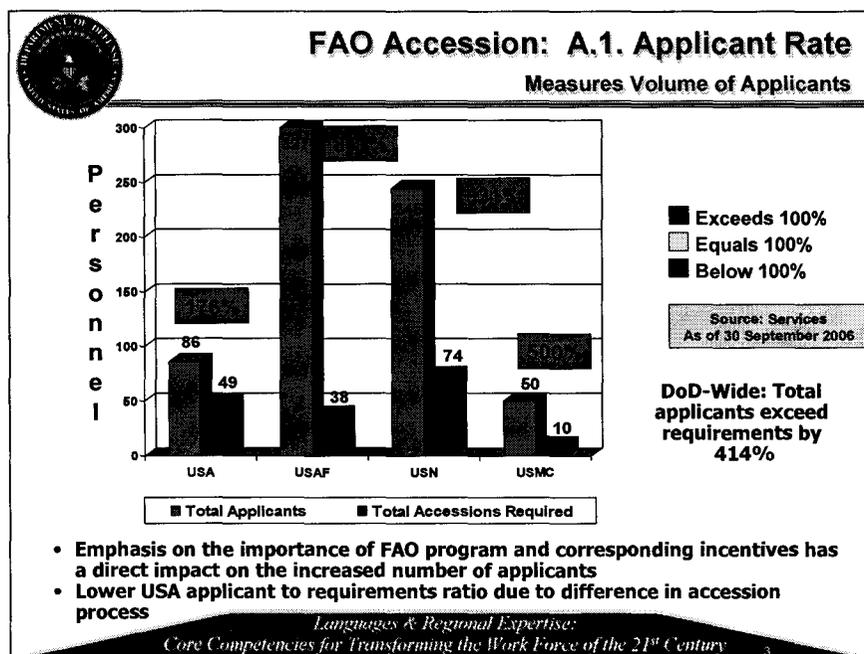


Figure 2 - FAO Accession, Applicant Rate

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, though a complete picture and larger trends will take a number of years to develop. The Air Force and Navy do not yet have data in many of the metrics due to the infancy of their FAO programs. There are no required changes to the metrics identified during this reporting period. The metrics will continue to be reviewed and will be updated and adjusted as Service FAO programs mature and new trends, requirements or issues are identified.

**FAO Accession.** DoD-wide focus on the importance of FAOs and corresponding incentives have greatly increased the number and quality of applicants. As a result, the Department exceeded all FAO accession goals. The metrics on accession applicant rates is designed to measure the volume of applicants to determine if each FAO program is receiving a sufficient number to maintain a healthy program. The reporting shows that interest in the FAO program is strong and candidates in each Service greatly exceed the required numbers. Applicants, in all Services, exceed requirements by a DoD-wide average of 414 percent with over 708 officers applying for 171 required FAO accessions. This metric is designed to measure the quality of FAO Program applicants in order to maintain a quality program. (Figure 2)

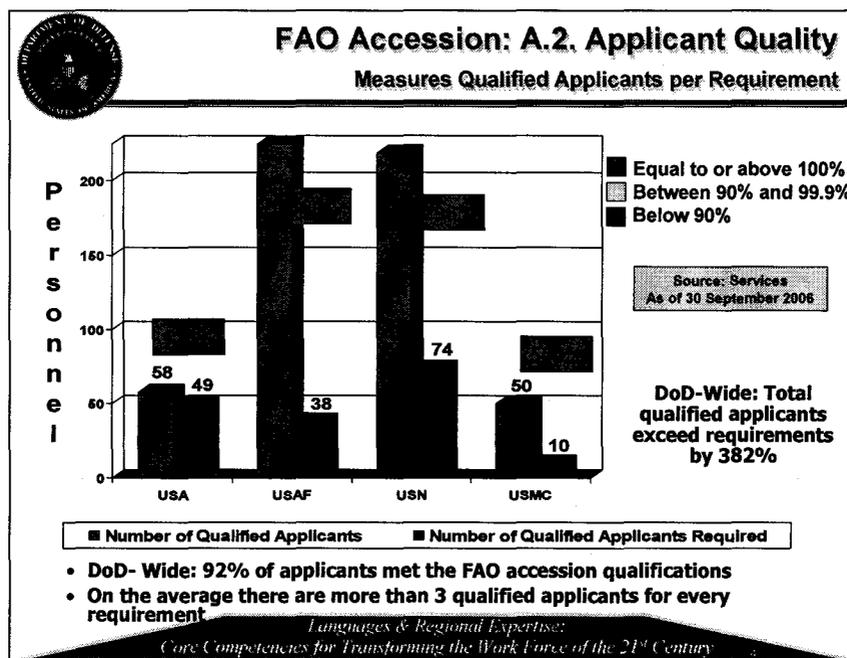


Figure 3 - FAO Accession, Applicant Quality

The quality of applicants are equally strong, showing that approximately 92 percent of those applicants met the minimum FAO accession qualifications, providing FAO selection panels with more than three qualified applicants per requirement. Due to their pre-accession screening process, the Army's accession numbers are not as large as the new programs. They continue to have more than sufficient qualified candidates to meet the requirements. (Figure 3)

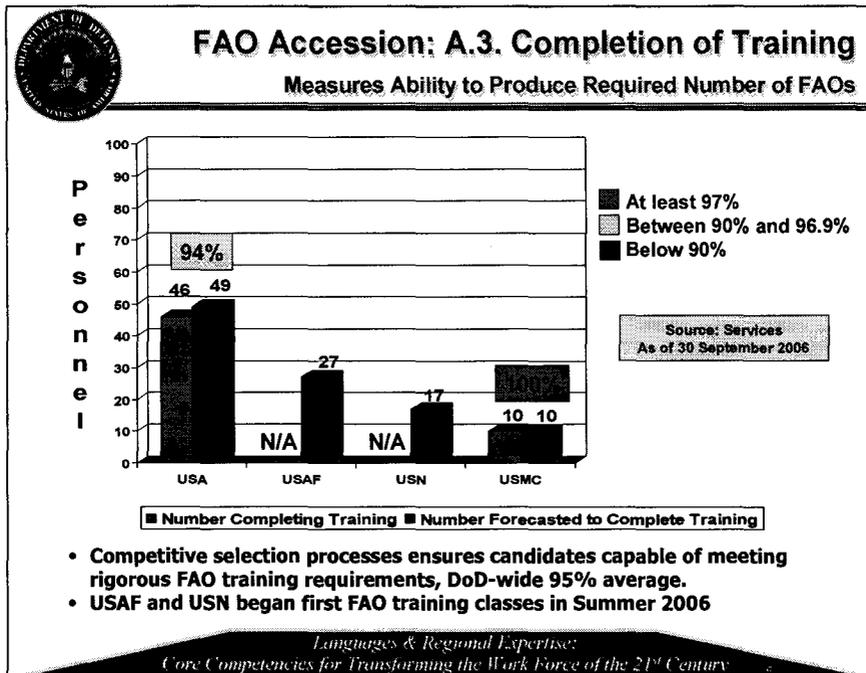


Figure 4 - FAO Accession, Training Completion

The Army and Marine Corps' average of 95 percent for training completion statistics indicate that the competitive selection process is ensuring candidates are capable of meeting the rigorous FAO training requirements. (Figure 4) The Air Force and Navy initial class of FAOs began their training in Summer 2006.

**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 5-7) The FAO Requirement Promotion Rate metric is designed to measure if FAO selections for promotion meet FAO promotion requirements. (Figures 8-9) Promotion rates (available for only the Army and Marine Corps) did show a negative trend in certain ranks this period, but are sufficient to meet their respective needs for FAOs at the higher ranks. Perhaps more importantly, despite a lower promotion rates in some ranks, the attrition rate among Army FAOs was 5 percent lower than the Service average, and on par with the Service average for Marines, in contradiction to the historical perception. The Department will continue to carefully monitor promotion rates for trends that might point to issues within the FAO program.

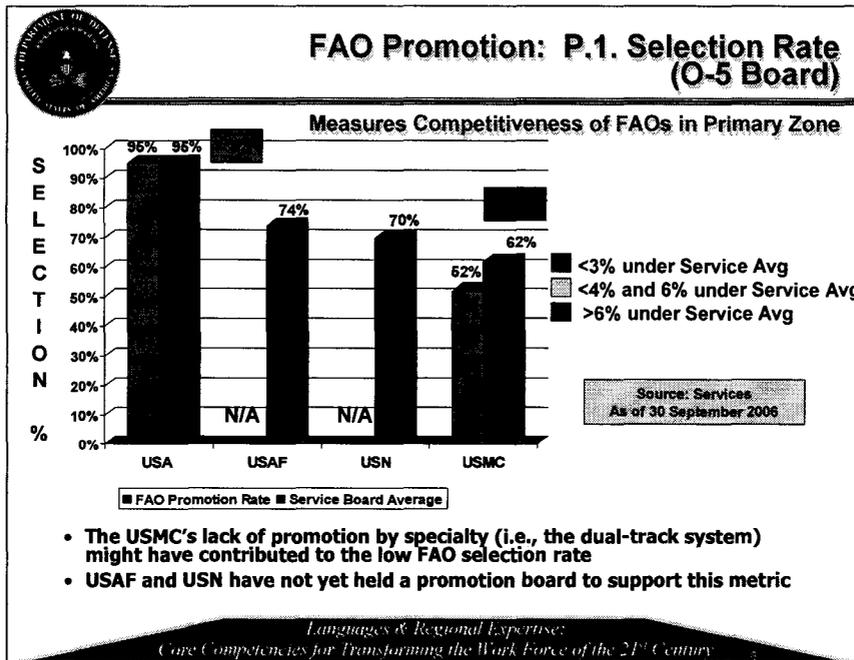


Figure 5 - FAO Promotion, O-5 Selection Rate

The Army met the goal for FAO promotion rates to O-5 (i.e., a FAO promotion rate not less than 3 percent below applicable Service average). However, the FAO promotion rate for O-6 was 15 percent lower than the Service average. In both cases, the boards promoted 100 percent of the required FAOs for each rank, so the statistics may be more indicative of a requirements issue than one of the promotion rate. Historically the FAO promotion rates to O-6 have been on par or higher than the Service average, so this year's promotion rate may be an anomaly. As noted though, despite the lower promotion rate, the attrition rate among Army FAOs was 5 percent lower than the Service average.

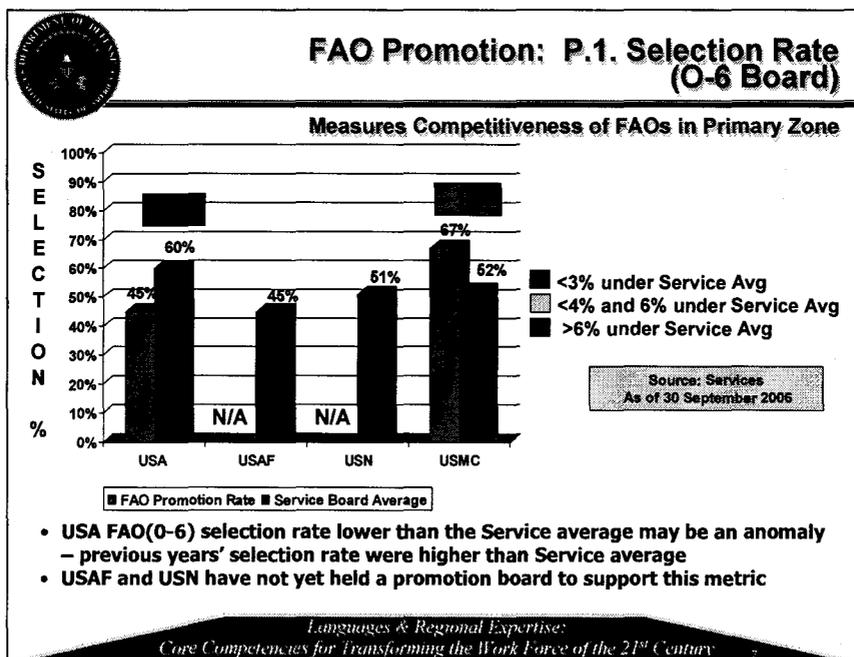


Figure 6 - FAO Promotion, O-6 Selection Rate

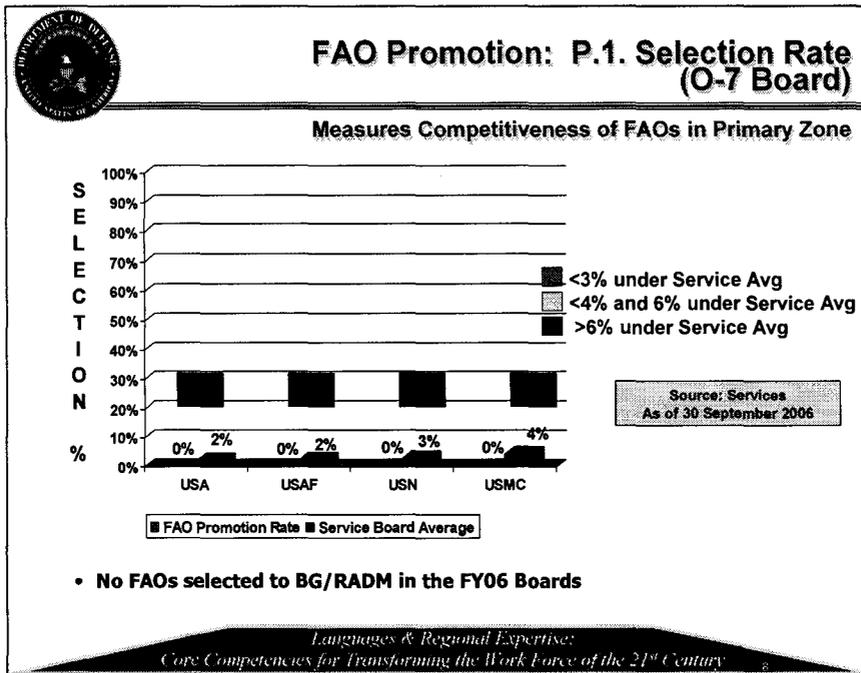


Figure 7 - FAO Promotion, O-7 Selection Rate

The Marine Corps exceeded the goal for FAO promotion rate to O-6 at 18 percent above Service average. However their O-5 promotion rate did not meet the goal and was 10 percent lower than Service average. The small population of FAOs in the Marine Corps makes the statistic very sensitive to change, and again, may be more indicative of a requirements issue than promotion rate problem. Additionally, the dual-track system used by the Marine Corps to manage the careers of FAOs (versus the single-track program used by the Army and Navy) may have been a contributing factor. Additionally of note from their report, “while the promotion rate of FAOs appears to trail slightly behind the general population, the number of FAOs and Regional Affairs Officers (RAOs) selected for battalion-level command effectively doubled from the previous year, and this implies that FAOs are competing competitively, and on a more even playing field than in the past. While this may send a mixed message of success, one clear and positive indication is that the Marine Corps is selecting more competitive officers for the program.”

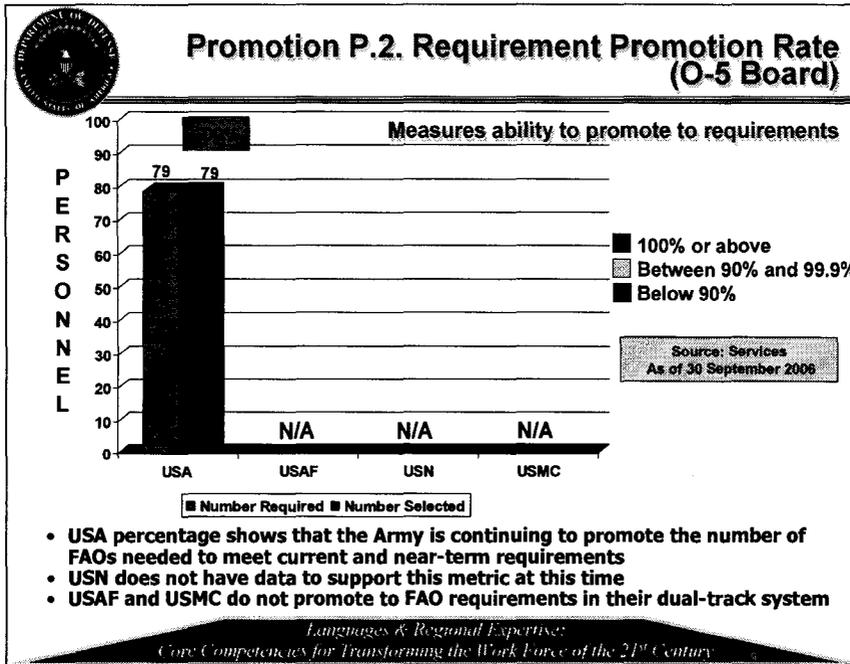


Figure 8 - FAO Promotion, O-5 Requirement Rate

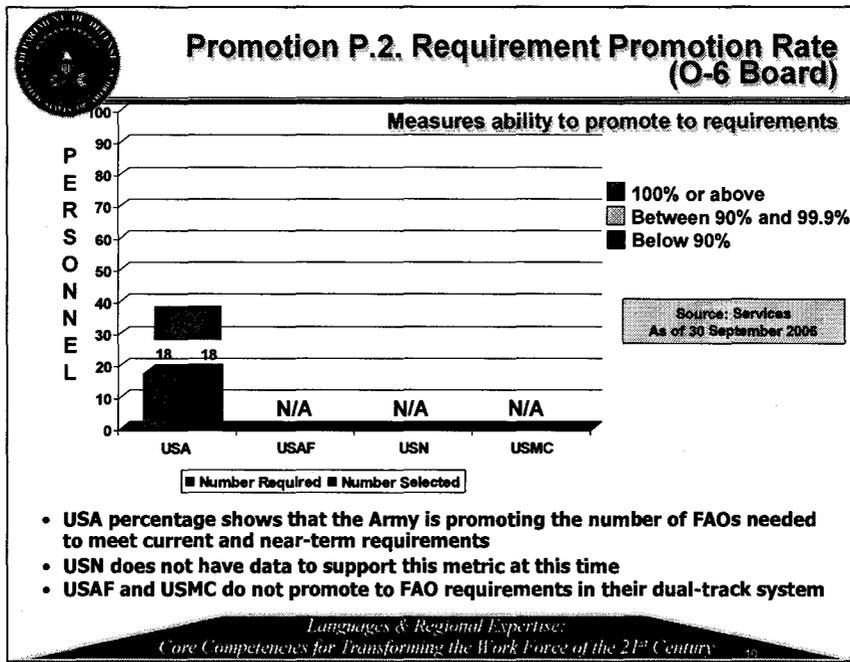


Figure 9 - FAO Promotion, O-6 Requirement Rate

One issue with the Services using a dual-track system is that because officers compete for promotion against the total general officer population as a group, it is difficult to track year to year, if sufficient officers are being promoted to fulfill the requirements for the FAO Program. Both the Marine Corps and Air Force will have to make a concerted effort within their proponent offices to track the requirement promotion rates.

Promotion and Requirement Promotion rate for the Navy and the Air Force is not yet available. Both will have FAOs at O-5 thru O-7 competing for promotion in FY07.

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 doesn’t focus on why an officer departed, but a number higher than the Service average will indicate that additional analysis is needed. The current report shows that attrition within the Army and Marine Corps FAOs is generally on par or less than the Service average. Retention data for the new programs are not currently available. (Figure 10)

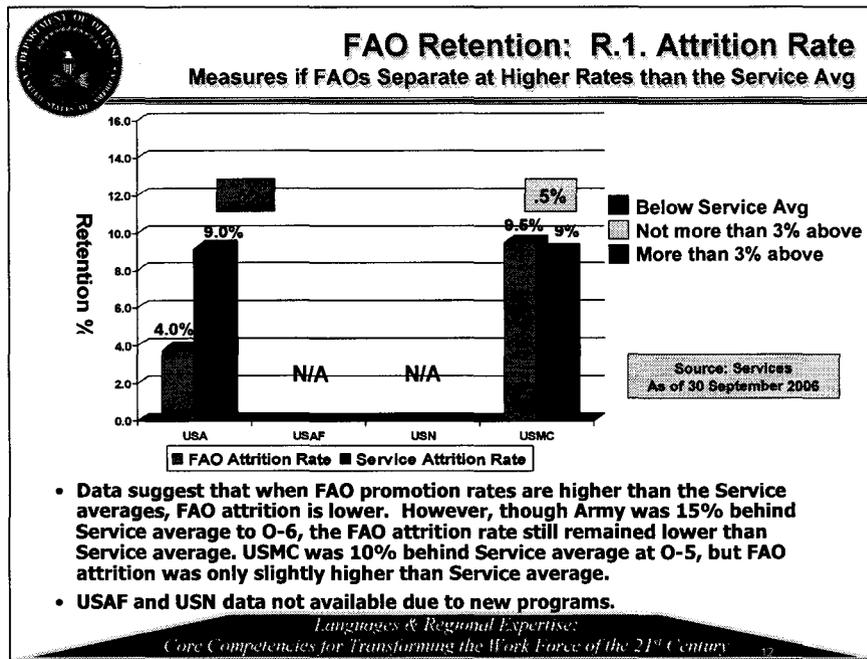


Figure 10 - FAO Retention, Attrition Rate

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’s goal is to fill at least 95 percent of all FAO-coded billets with FAO-qualified personnel. The Army FAO fill rates was 98 percent, but the Marine Corps rate was very low at 49 percent. The Marine Corps continues to refine and expand its FAO requirements and has increased its annual FAO production accordingly. Recent increases in training quotas and future Table of Organization adjustments will allow a much greater fill rate. While this low utilization rate does not appear to negatively impact FAO accession and retention, the measure creates a baseline for future data comparison. (Figure 11)

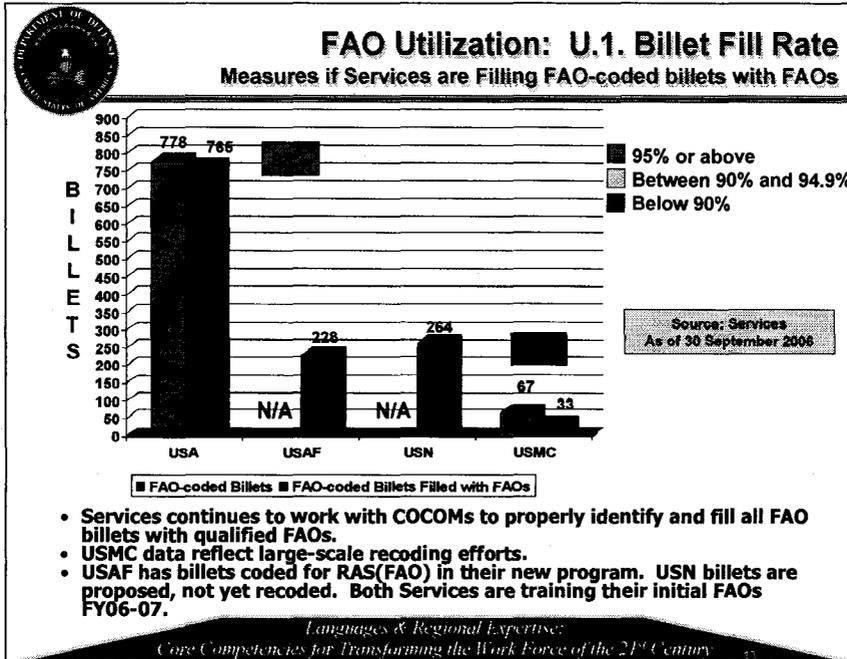


Figure 11 - FAO Utilization, Billet Fill Rate

The Air Force reports 228 FAO-coded billets that will eventually be filled with FAOs trained to the standards of the DoD FAO program. They are currently filling 185 of those billets with officers that are not qualified FAOs. The Navy FAO program has identified 264 billets that will be re-coding in FY07 to FAO. Both the Air Force and Navy's initial group of FAOs under the new standards will complete their training in FY08.

**FAO Manpower Statistics**

Measure	Description	USA	USAF	USN	USMC	TOTAL
M.1.	FAO-coded Billets	778	228	*264	67	1337
M.2.	FAOs in coded billets	765	0	*22	33	820
M.3.	FAOs in non-FAO billets	58	0	*57	230	345
M.4.	FAOs in Training Pipeline	194	27	17	30	267
M.5.	FAOs on Retired List	40	0	0	18	58

\* USN billets are proposed, not yet recoded.

Source: Services  
As of 30 September 2006

*Languages & Regional Expertise:  
Core Competencies for Transforming the Work Force of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

Figure 12 - 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 extensively use civilian education institutions graduate programs, so the per individual costs vary greatly, but the average cost is at the same level as the other services. Service differences in language training costs are primarily from additional funds used for language sustainment training. The in-country training programs is an area where Service approaches have been 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 model uses a 6 month plan, though they have not yet had FAOs complete this phase. The Air Force currently plans for 1-2 months, modeled on their Language and Area Study Immersion (LASI) program. The minimum length of ICT and its impact on language and regional knowledge continues to be an area to watch. The Air Force is working to expand and increase the time in country through follow-on assignments, professional military education in country and programs like the Personnel Exchange Program (PEP).

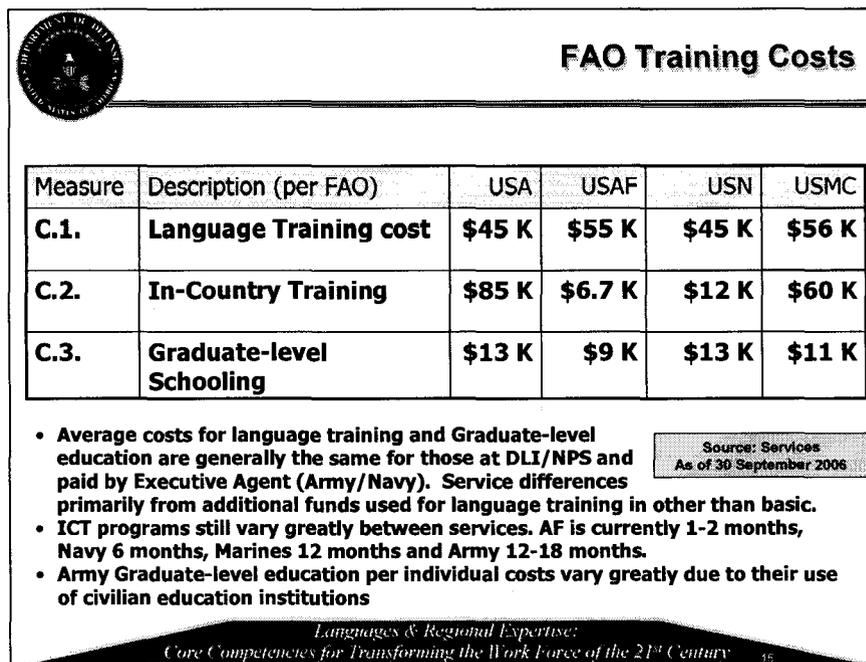


Figure 13 - FAO Training Costs

## 9. Conclusion

The DoD Joint FAO Program fulfills the Department's need for a highly trained and educated cadre of commissioned officers possessing regional expertise, language skills, and professional military experience essential to current and future national security requirements.

Critical analysis of the overall program review and reporting reveal that the Services have stepped forward and transformed their FAO programs to meet new joint FAO program standards for competitive selection, training and qualifications, language proficiency, regional knowledge, and graduate level education as well as the unique mission requirements of their Service. The

Combatant Commands and Defense Agencies that use the highly skilled, professional FAO are satisfied with the officer and continue to demand more.

The analysis of the metrics on FAO accession, retention, promotion and utilization rates confirm that while the measurements are useful in tracking Service progress, more time will be needed to develop a full picture and allow the Navy and Air Force programs to mature.

The joint FAO program is building a warfighter capable of advising, leading, and engaging in military contingencies ranging from security cooperation to Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations. Currently, about 80 percent of FAO billets have been identified as joint billets; oversight at the Office of the Secretary of Defense level provides senior level oversight and ensures consistent and sustained quality for every officer appointed as a FAO. The transformed joint FAO program has resulted in a focused program, which is embraced by the Services, Joint Staff, and Combatant Commands as an essential warfighter capability.

The Department is committed to ensuring that the joint FAO professionals meet its needs for global military operations. The Foreign Area Officers, developed under the Joint FAO program, are the model for how to build, train, and sustain a language capable, highly educated, culturally aware regional expert to successfully execute the U.S. National Security Strategy.

## **Services, Joint Staff, and 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 mature FAO Program remains the model for training and managing regional experts with military, political, cultural, and linguistic skills. Today, Army FAOs are serving globally in critical positions. FAOs are a vital component in shaping future U.S. foreign policy and continue to operate at the geographic combatant commands, at embassies around the world, and on senior level DoD staffs at the Pentagon in capacities that impact this policy.

Since last year's FAO report, the Army has continued to take steps to improve this world class program. The Army has streamlined accessions without impacting a process that identifies and selects only the best qualified candidates. This process is now complete and in future years we will access a single year group of officers annually during their seventh year of service. The Army has improved language training by adjusting the curriculum so that it places added emphasis on speaking - an important component of FAO tradecraft. We have also conducted an exhaustive review of Regional and Security Studies graduate programs to ensure our new FAOs get the best quality education that our nation's universities have to offer. We are concerned with quality of life for our officers and the Army also acknowledges that FAOs serve in locations with elevated threat levels. To mitigate the risk of serving in this environment, designated Army FAOs attend a new program for advanced security and evasive driver training. The Army has also taken steps to improve accommodations for FAOs in several areas of the world by improving maintenance programs and making residential security upgrades.

The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) emphasized a need for the Services to improve foreign language capabilities, cultural awareness, and regional expertise. The QDR also recommends expanding FAO capabilities. The Army is responding in several ways. As a Title X force provider, the Army continues to proactively coordinate with Combatant Commands and Defense Agencies through a series of aggressive programs to ensure their increased needs for Army FAOs are met. The Army is increasing FAO capabilities in our Army Service Component Commands to provide a ready pool of experience to deploy in a crisis and provide tactical and operational commanders with the same high quality expertise and performance seen at higher echelons. FAOs are a force multiplier, a critical enabler facilitating the use of kinetic and non-kinetic means to achieve the commander's objectives. They are a combat proven asset - highly

valued by those commanders that fight our nation's wars and they continue to prove their worth daily.

### AIR FORCE

The Air Force International Affairs Specialist (IAS) Program meets DoD FAO program standards through the competitive selection and development of a cadre of commissioned officers with regional and political-military knowledge, cultural competence, and language expertise. Within the IAS Program there are two development specialties: Regional Affairs Strategist (RAS—16F Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC)), which equates to the DoD FAO and creates a corps of officers with regional expertise and professional language skills; and Political-military Affairs Strategist (PAS—16P AFSC) which creates a cadre of officers with broad international affairs and political-military experience.

In its second year of implementation, the IAS Program achieved several significant milestones. Most notably, the inaugural class of 26 RAS officers began deliberate development at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) in Monterrey, CA. In 2006, the Program achieved substantial progress in Total Force implementation with the partial release (full report pending) of COCOM foreign language and regional expertise requirements and IAS implementation guidelines for the Air Force Reserve. SAF/IA improved the efficiency and utility of IAS career field management and DoD-wide RAS manning distribution with the development and publication of the IAS Prioritization Plan—now a vital tool used by the Air Staff and Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC). Another important initiative establishes a larger rated officer presence in IAS. The new “fair share” allocation ensures appropriate rated/non-rated expertise in the IAS Program. In 2006, IAS implementation moved aggressively forward. Air Force FAO efforts are correctly vectored and postured to meet DoD and Service requirements.

### NAVY

The Navy implemented the FAO designators on September 5, 2006, establishing a separate and distinct Restricted Line officer FAO community. The Navy is currently exploring the development of a Reserve Component (RC) for FAO and is in the early stages of defining the Reserve FAO requirement.

Two FAO designators have been established: 1710, which is applied to officers who meet graduate education and language requirements specified by DoD, and 1720, which is applied to those under instruction. Navy FAOs are assigned to one of four regions, aligned with the geographical combatant commands, where they will dedicate their efforts and refine their skills as regional experts. FAOs receive initial and refresher training from multiple sources including Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), Defense Language Institute (DLI), various language/cultural immersion programs, and web-based training. Sustainment programs are under development.

FAO graduate education in political-military regional studies is provided through the NPS National Security Affairs (NSA) Department. Language training is provided if FAOs do not have resident language capabilities, with an expectation that FAOs listen, read, and speak at the “Limited Working Proficiency” level (2/2/2) and ultimately reach the goal of “General Professional Proficiency” level (3/3/3). Currently 40 FAOs report proficiency at the 2/2 level in one of 16 different foreign languages and 62 (84 percent) claim some level of foreign language

skill. Navy has programmed to send FAOs through follow-on language/cultural immersion training after their formal education in Monterey.

Navy accessed its first group of FAOs, totaling 74, in FY06 through the Lateral Transfer/Redesignation board process with boards held semi-annually. The initial group has a diverse background including Line, Restricted Line, Staff Corps, and the elements of the Navy Reserves.

An initial billet base review conducted in the first half of FY06 established a proposed FAO requirement of 264 billets worldwide, with an additional 100 in training at any given time. The Navy currently has no operational billets coded for FAO but will begin the recoding process in FY07, and anticipates having at least 200 operational and 100 student billets recoded by the end of FY13. Twenty of the 74 Navy FAOs are currently serving in FAO proposed billets.

### MARINE CORPS

The Marine Corps has made a renewed effort to refine and expand the FAO program. This report reflects a more accurate picture of the FAO program than previous year's submission. This is in part due to the greater detail requested from the Defense Language Office's Report format, and increased Marine Corps efforts to review and improve its FAO program.

The past year has seen some notable achievements in the FAO program, among them, a Corps-wide validation effort of FAO billets and a resultant proposed increase in coded FAO billets (and a necessary increase in FAO production to meet that commitment). While the promotion rate of FAOs appears to trail slightly behind the general population, the number of FAOs and Regional Affairs Officers (RAOs) selected for battalion-level command effectively doubled from the previous year, and this implies that FAOs are competing competitively, and on a more even playing field than in the past. While this may send a mixed message of success, one clear and positive indication is that the Marine Corps is selecting more competitive officers for the program. In the future, we will aim to mirror this success throughout the program.

There is much to commend within the Marine Corps FAO program, and the total force cultural and language efforts we are undertaking will benefit from FAO participation. A notable example is the Center for Advanced Operational Cultural Learning, into which FAOs are incorporated. Still, there remain areas in which we can improve such as in defining and filling FAO requirements (billets), and in carefully managing our FAO population in terms of promotion. Currently, only approximately 50 percent of coded FAO billets are filled with FAOs. Recent increases in training quotas and future Table of Organization adjustments have changed the structure of Marine Corps FAO billets and will allow a much greater fill rate. The Marine Corps dual-track career assignment system means that FAOs must be fully qualified in both basic Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) and FAO skills. The difficulty of dual-tracking is that it is not easy for FAOs to maintain competitiveness in their basic field. We are, however, improving this situation. With better accession practices and better manpower management, we anticipate successfully bridging the small gap between current FAO rates of promotion and general rates of promotion at the 0-5 and 0-6 ranks.

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

### DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (DIA)

The DIA is the largest single user of FAOs in the DoD. Historically, DIA has utilized 40 percent of the Army's FAOs – more than all the Combatant Commands combined. As the Air Force and Navy FAO programs continue to develop, DIA anticipates a similar utilization rate for the FAOs of those Services.

The Services historically have manned the DIA at an overall fill rate of 80 percent. The Defense Attaché Service (DAS) (which utilizes the majority of the Agency's FAOs) has been manned at an overall rate of 98 percent, and the non-DAS portion of DIA at an overall fill rate of only 74 percent. The aggregate number for the DAS can be misleading. Certain regions (Africa, for example) are manned at significantly lower levels.

All attaché billets require FAO skill sets and some level of proficiency in the principal language of the country of assignment. Regional and host-country knowledge, an understanding of the culture and appropriate language skills are vital to the performance of officers in these assignments. The desired language skill level is 3/3/3 (listening, reading, speaking) in the principal language, but available training time often precludes achieving that level. This is compounded by the fact that 80 percent of nominees for the Joint Military Attaché School arrive for attaché training with no proficiency in the principal language of the country to which they are being assigned. Rather than focusing available training time and money on moving an experienced, language-capable FAO up to a higher level of language skill (e.g., from 2/2/2 to 3/3/3), the overwhelming amount of available resources must be devoted to just gaining the basic language qualification (2/2/2) before the officer is deployed.

DIA has three General/Flag Officer positions within the DAS: the Defense Attachés in Moscow, Beijing, and (in the near future) London. Like every other attaché positions, officers with FAO skills should fill all three assignments. In addition, regardless of the final decisions as to who should become the senior defense official in a given country, any General/Flag Officers that fill those positions should be officers with FAO skills (whether or not they are designated as the Defense Attaché).

### DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY (DSCA)

FAOs are an integral part of the security assistance community, deeply involved in security assistance and security cooperation programs which directly support U.S. national security objectives and benefit the foreign policy and national security of the United States. These security cooperation programs are directly linked to DSCA's mission of building relationships that promote U.S. interests, building allied and partner capacities for self-defense and coalition operations in the global war on terrorism, and promoting peacetime and contingency access for U.S. forces. The true value of our FAOs is that they understand the linkages between national security objectives and operational and tactical requirements on the ground. Due to their unique education and experience, FAOs know what needs to be done and who needs to do it.

FAOs also bring a total package of capabilities to the job from day one, due to their extensive education, training and experience. There is very little time spent “spinning up,” or bringing FAOs “up to speed.” This is especially true for more experienced FAOs who have previous assignments in the Geographic Combatant Commands or on the Joint Staff.

FAOs bring regional expertise to the security assistance process. Every country in the world has significant and subtle differences, and the FAOs understand what will work well in a country and what will not work well. Working in the complex milieu of Washington further develops the FAOs understanding of what is required to implement U.S. national security objectives. Working at DSCA exposes FAOs to the role of Congress and the role of other Executive Branch agencies and in particular, the Department of State. When FAOs return to the field, they take with them a better understanding of what is practical, feasible, acceptable and suitable in terms of U.S. efforts in the world.

#### DEFENSE THREAT REDUCTION AGENCY (DTRA)

DTRA has enjoyed a close relationship with the FAO community since the time of its inception in 1998 as a DoD Agency. FAOs conduct arms verification as Inspection Team Chiefs for the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaties, Site Commanders of remote monitoring facilities in the heart of Russia, and policy analysts. In recent years, DTRA FAOs have branched out to conduct new missions. FAOs now execute missions in support of various programs such as the International Counter-Proliferation (ICP) and the Small Arms Light Weapons (SALW) programs, Plutonium Production Reactor Agreement (PPRA), and the Enhanced End-Use Monitoring (EEUM) (done in conjunction with the Defense Security and Cooperation Agency). FAOs are also utilized to provide support to former Soviet States in the development of effective programs to fight the spread of Avian influenza, and are developing working relationships with arms control counterparts in Canada, Germany, Korea, Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and other nations.

Language expertise and knowledge of the region are essential for FAOs to perform well in DTRA. FAOs frequently serve as inspection team chiefs conducting treaty-related inspections in Europe and the former Soviet Union. Others serve as site commanders at a remote portal monitoring site deep in Russia. As a result, there is the opportunity to develop a strong working relationship with counterparts and local indigenous people alike, something for which FAOs are especially adept.

#### JOINT STAFF

This report focuses on FAO manning requirements. It identifies authorized billets, filled rates and projected FAO increases from FY 07–13. Of the nine combatant commands, seven have formal FAO programs. This is an increase of two since last year’s report. USSOCOM and USTRANSCOM stood up their FAO programs during CY 2006. USJFCOM has no funded FAO requirements (active or reserve) and does not plan to add FAOs to their manning. USSTRATCOM does not have a FAO program or coded billets.

Within the Joint Staff, the J-5 and J-2 use FAOs in their directorates and have submitted reports. The J-2 submitted a report through the Defense Intelligence Agency. Combatant command and joint staff inputs varied greatly in detail, depending on the size and diversity of the program.

A review of the current authorizations and on hand FAOs and their utilization show that 77 percent of combatant command and Joint Staff authorized FAO coded billets are filled by Army officers, 20 percent by Air Force officers, 2 percent by Marine Corps officers and 1 percent by Navy officers. The significant off-set is due to the Army having a mature FAO program. Across the Joint Staff and Combatant Commands, 90 percent of all authorized FAO coded billets are filled with FAOs. USSOCOM reports a 25 percent actual fill rate, due to the infancy of their program.

There has also been considerable work to increase FAOs across the COCOMs with the standing up of the Navy and Air Force FAO programs and the refinement of requirements from the Army and Marine Corps. Four out of seven combatant commands have projected FAO increases for FY 07–FY 13. Combatant commands have requested an increase of 29 percent in total authorized FAO-coded billets. The projected increase would boost Air Force authorized FAO coded billets by 47 percent and Navy 540 percent (increased from 1 billet to 30 billets).

