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# FOREIGN AREA OFFICER

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## HORIZONS

THE ACADEMIC JOURNAL OF THE ARMY FOREIGN AREA OFFICER ASSOCIATION

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# Overcoming FAO Traps

## Lieutenant Colonel Andrus W. Chaney, US Army

As the Army Foreign Area Officer Association (AFAOA) embarked upon its inaugural academic journal, the founders debated the scope of the journal. One of the biggest fears was the writers would rehash arguments about improving the FAO training pipeline, discuss how to improve or change FAO language training, or even worse, limit their discussions to their first-person experiences that FAOs write in the vacuums of their personalities, time, and location(s). Then, the group had a longer discussion about which level of security cooperation/assistance articles should be addressed in the journal. Lastly, the board wholeheartedly agreed that the sole focus of the journal should be on how Army FAOs support the Army's mission.

### **I have often said if a FAO does not have an opinion, then they likely are not a very good FAO.**

I have often said if a FAO does not have an opinion, then they likely are not a very good FAO. I have also often said if a FAO has too many opinions then they are likely not a very good FAO. One of the many purposes of the association's academic journal is to direct the future of the functional area. It is to inform, opine without repercussions, and highlight future potential.

During the discussion about the purpose of the AFAOA academic journal, we were lucky to have several FAOs from my first observations. These FAOs discussed this topic and, therefore, there were dissenting opinions to the points made above. One FAO argued that a "...bit of rehashing the FAO training pipeline might be worthwhile to release necessarily cyclic steam with the younger writers. I think it is also key here to capture historically what is happening with the branch through these articles. I think we should orient higher and then let the academic board chop on submissions. We are not looking for someone's IRT report here: put that in the bi-annual newsletter which should be more about the functional area's past, current, and future."

As I participated, listened, disagreed, agreed, and pontificated on the purpose of the Army FAO Association's academic journal I thought my first contribution should be an enclosure I wrote to a white paper to the FAO General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) in 2023 that never was fully distributed for many reasons. I wrote the following article just after I departed the Human Resources Command (HRC) serving almost three years as the FAO Branch Chief, the longest a FAO has ever served in that position. During my three years at HRC, I continuously observed and

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heard some of the same arguments, most of which were focused on an individual perspective and lacked a holistic FAO perspective. Few FAOs understand anything outside of their Area of Concentration (AOC). As my time at HRC came to closure I grabbed my penciled list of post it notes stuck on my cubicle wall, of which I had labeled FAO traps.

I offer these traps to the community so that we can move on from most of them, further investigate some, and focus our functional area's efforts on key and specific areas to improve our profession. I cannot count the number of meetings I have been in where one of the following 29 FAO traps has derailed progress. I hope my discussion of them helps our newest generation, and perhaps our older generation, overcome a personal experience or obstacle with one of the FAO traps. I also hope highlighting these traps allows our members to move forward from the traps and focus more on specific areas for improvement. Eliminating rabbit holes is a personal passion of mine. I hope my FAO traps article assists in doing so.

## **Eliminating rabbit holes is a personal passion of mine.**

### **What is a FAO Trap?**

I define a FAO trap as an area where a FAO's experience creates a bias towards a FAO area and, therefore, the FAO then proceeds to try to correct the area to overcome their experience.

Other FAO traps are inherent to being

a FAO and any systematic changes the functional area has made. Overall, FAO Traps are FAO obstacles, most of which all FAOs will experience while being a FAO. Most of these are not new, some go back to 1907, and almost all of them, if you asked a group of FAOs, would have a difference of opinion. Almost all of those differences of opinion are because each Army officer comes to the FAO functional area with differences (family, age, career goals), and because of those differences, every Army FAO goes through the training pipeline similarly but differently. Therefore, if you asked a hundred Army FAOs their opinion of the FAO training pipeline, you'd get 100 different opinions. Those 100 opinions are captured in my FAO Traps.

### **Language**

For all FAOs, language is pre-determined based on their prior skills, the officer's Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB), and their preferences during the Voluntary Transfer Incentive Program (VTIP). However, because of these determiners, how a FAO conducts language training, or if they do not, creates multiple biases and issues within their AOC. One of these biases is true, but most are perpetuated myths.

### **1. The State Department's Foreign Service Institute (FSI) trains language(s) better than the Defense Language Institute (DLI).**

This trap is often used to justify consolidating the FAO

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pipeline in the National Capitol Region (NCR). This is likely true, at least in the speaking portion. However, FSI costs significantly more than DLI Monterey or Washington (3x), it has limited capacity to absorb Army FAO language requirements, and FAOs who go to FSI struggle to pass the DLPT upon completion, as they are not taught it during class. The Army will likely never move its language training in mass to FSI for multiple reasons, mainly because of the financial costs.

**2. The Army can reduce PCSs by doing all language training in the NCR.** This trap is often used by FAOs who did language training in the NCR, attended FSI, or were assigned niche languages such as Turkish, Vietnamese, or Serbian-Croatian. These FAOs must learn that language training through DLI Washington is done differently and costs significantly more. Having most of the prominent languages moved (again) from DLI- Monterey to Washington would double the Army's budget for FAO language training and likely result in fewer training opportunities. In a resource-constrained environment, doing so would negate the overall attempt at reducing FAO training costs for the Army.

**3. FAOs do not graduate DLI with a 3/3/2.** This trap is used by FAOs who are polyglots or prolific language speakers or senior Army officials who encounter a native speaker and then later work with a DLI graduate. Only some people can translate for the

Secretary of Defense, and we should understand that DLI does an excellent job of taking a non-speaker to a speaker within a short time. In 2022, as the HRC Branch Chief I collected the stats of this trap, and around 45%+ of FAOs were graduating DLI with a 3/3/2 or 1+. The other 54% were graduating at the 2/2/1+ level or higher, and very few FAOs a year (single digits on one hand) were failing language training. Compared to the rest of the Army, FAOs have the language skills we require.

**4. If a FAO fails DLI, they can still self-study and achieve the 2/2/1+ standard.** As someone who almost failed out of DLI-Monterey, I find this trap utterly false and only applies to a few distinct FAOs. DLI is the most intensive language training a FAO will ever get; if they cannot do it there, they likely will only achieve a 2/2/1+ if they are a polyglot type. However, in that case, most polyglots would not fail DLI anyway. Army FAOs, as a functional area, are soft in this area. U.S. Army Special Forces (SF) allows an officer to fail the Q-course and returns them to their basic branch. FAOs should not be afraid to do this either for our officers that fail language training. Those officers who fail DLI may not have the heart to be a FAO. Those at DLI Monterey have the opportunity for some retraining, which does not cost additional funds; those in Washington do not. Either way, a FAO should only move on to the next training phase if they have achieved the minimum training standard.

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## **5. My language does not matter, and I will never serve in the country where it spoken.**

48Ps and 48Es usually mention this trap, and it has some validity. Only some 48E or 48P Turkish, Vietnamese, Thai, and Serbian-Croatian speakers serve in those countries (outside of IRT). I surmise less than 50%, but HRC could research and get an actual percentage. This issue creates a huge morale challenge within those two AOCs between the "haves" and "have nots." The haves are the Russian, Chinese, and Korean speakers, and the have-nots are the rest.

## **6. We should not be in classes with enlisted members and learn numbers we will not use.**

FAOs usually say this myth have a low DLPT score or struggled to finish DLI Monterey. Most FAOs who attended language training at DLI-Monterey before 2010 will complain of being in classes with enlisted members suffering through the numbers drill and not speaking enough. Most do not know that this changed to almost all FAOs being in an all-officer class with more FAO focus. This change raised the cost of language training for DLI, and thus the Army, and it should be investigated if we are trying to reduce FAO training costs. The FAO community imposed this cost on DLI, but we have yet to analyze whether it produced better FAO linguists. I surmise it did, but the cost was not worth it. The overarching effect of this was a reduced arrival date for courses, which affected FAOs' PCS timelines

and has created much friction with onboarding FAOs, e.g., where there used to be four Russian courses a year, for example, there are now two. That means we have to consolidate our incoming trainees into the same classes and might be extending their training timelines. Most of the timeline issues with in-region training (IRT) were caused by reducing the number of language courses FAOs can attend.

## **7. We should eliminate specific niche languages.**

FAOs trained in one of these niche languages constantly perpetuate this bias, and they feel invalidated in their struggle to learn a language that they will never use. I concur that we should stop training FAOs in Turkish, Serbo-Croatian, Vietnamese, Thai, and others. Our system allows us to train language on demand for certain countries. We should challenge our system to do that more and not send new FAOs through language training where they will never use the language.

**We should challenge our system to do that more and not send new FAOs through language training where they will never use the language.**

### **In-Region Training (IRT)**

**Why is IRT so important to becoming a FAO, and why twelve months?** In 1907, in Peking, China, IRT was twenty-four months. A Mandarin-speaking Army officer would spend twenty-four months at UC Berkley learning

Mandarin and getting a master's degree, then spend two years in China. Later, it changed to Hong Kong, but it was still two years long. Stillwell spent over three months building a road for a U.S. Government project during his IRT; during that time, he solidified his language skills daily. From 1917 the Army allowed cross-attaching FAOs to other agencies and respected their requirements. All of the FAO greats did this, so what has changed? The answer is that we formalized the Army requirements over time in the FA48 functional area. A great question is why Army senior leaders continuously question the value and cost of a (FAO) Soldier's cultural immersion into a foreign society. Is it that expensive? How expensive is SF training? We will only win the narrative if a FAO can answer these questions to a senior Army leader.

**8. All regions should adopt the Garmisch or Beijing IRT method.** The Beijing method started in 1907 in Peking, China, and later the 48E method in Germany in the early 1940s. Both methods conducted language training at the center and then IRT out of the same location. This method is at the heart of how FAOs are trained, and the FAO GOSC should relook this with a 2040 modernization. These two methods of training FAOs worked and still work because they are done based on how they were historically done in those two regions, and historical funding streams support them. For 48Es, Garmisch is nice, but the schooling situation creates many issues for families. The Army drew down the

mission support aspects for families, and the current family support differs from the program officers experienced from 1950-2000. For 48Ps (China FAOs), the previous training models are obsolete. We are still waiting to get IRT back to Beijing, a strategic issue we must address. Why are/were these two models the premier IRT model? I would suggest because they have the following aspects: 1) multiple cultural touchpoints create in-depth comprehension; 2) standardized program expectations for all trainees; 3) a standardized rating scheme for all trainees; and 4) a focus on a Geographical Combatant Command (GCC) and an Army Service Component Command (ASCC). I would argue that standardizing IRT is the key to the future of Army FAOs. This argument will be presented with an immense amount of pushback from all FAOs because their IRT experience was so unique that they cannot look beyond what a standardized IRT experience would have given them.

**9. IRT should be a language immersion experience.** This trap comes from FAOs in the 48B, 48J, and 48G worlds, mainly because those AOCs have multiple countries that speak the same language. Around only 50% of 48Ps or 48Es conduct IRT in a country where they speak their DLI-trained language. If only around 50% of FAOs conduct IRT in a country where their DLI training is undertaken, then why do we, as a FAO community, consistently say IRT should be a language immersion experience? 48Es, 48Ps, and half of the 48Js cannot conduct IRT in a country

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that speaks their DLI-trained language, and it has never been 100% achieved. This is a FAO myth and trap, and is based on what AOC the FAO is in.

**10. IRT must be twelve months.** This trap comes from FAOs that conducted the traditional twelve-month IRT and it has some validity. During my research for the IRT Officer Efficiency Report (OER) White Paper, I found that FAO Proponent waived only about nine percent of FAOs' IRT. Of that, a majority are SF Officers with extensive experience in the theatre. Not all FAOs have the timeline to conduct a twelve-month IRT, which we have made worse with our FAO-only DLI courses. This requirement has reduced the class start dates throughout the year, which has restricted putting together the FAO training pipeline puzzle.

**11. IRT brings families into the embassy environment, which is the most important thing.** This works for IRT FAOs who have spouses and families, and less than 50% of these are married and with children. It is different for each AOC, but mostly, those FAOs who move to a country just for IRT spend most of their time traveling while their families deal with living in a foreign country where they do not speak the language. How many of those spouses would prefer to stay in Monterey or the U.S. while their spouse traveled during IRT? The single IRT FAOs occupy a house only to likely never live in it. I'm not sure this FAO trap is a real argument.

**12. We should establish regional centers of excellence for FAOs (like 48E and 48P).** This trap is usually made by Garmisch grads or those who had a bad IRT experience and think they should have been "spoon-fed" like the Garmisch IRT FAOs. The regional center concept has much value, and the GOSC should focus the Army FAO 2040 on this concept. I think we have dispersed our FAOs to too many embassies worldwide with little guidance and training, and FAO training has become an individual experience, which is diluting our brand.

**13. We should improve our IRT handbook.** This trap is accurate and almost always comes from new IRT FAOs. The last version I saw still has the National Guard FAO Strategic Scout symbol on it. I think it was last updated in 1997.

## I think it was last updated in 1997.

**14. IRT FAOs should attend Joint Military Attaché School (JMAS) and the Security Cooperation Officer (SCO) course during IRT.** This FAO trap is an excellent idea, and the training these two courses give would go with a FAO into all the assignments they will have. However, both courses require you to reattend them once you pass a five-year mark. Therefore, having IRT FAOs attend these courses would not only significantly increase the number of students these courses would be required to accommodate, which neither course can, but it would also put a dual burden on the officer and

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family to have to attend the course twice. This trap would also cost the Army twice for the same training. I would surmise this requirement is at the heart of many FAO's issues with multiple PCSs. To overcome this, FAOs should go to Advanced Civil Schooling (ACS) in the NCR, which would synchronize them with JMAS or SCO training.

### **Advanced Civil Schooling**

**15. FAOs attending Ivy League schools have automatic street credibility with their Foreign Service counterparts.** This trap is, of course, perpetuated by FAOs who attended Ivy League schools and is a fallacy that solely justifies high-end ACS slots. There are minimal measurable effects of creating a better FAO through their attendance at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) versus an Ivy League school. The officers who are "better FAOs" because they went to an Ivy League school were likely better already, however, having Harvard on a resume surely impresses someone. We shouldn't orient our entire ACS policy around having a higher status at the table with Department of State foreign service officers.

**We shouldn't orient our entire ACS policy around having a higher status at the table with Department of State foreign service officers.**

**16. ACS should be 24 months.** This trap

is usually perpetuated by FAOs who joined FAO to go to a specific program and later learned that FAOs only do twelve-month ACS programs. It is a myth that ACS used to be 24 months long. Historically, ACS was created in 1916 and has almost always been 12 months for Army officers, specifically FAOs. The 24 months come from some programs, such as the original 48Ps and 48Es, who took language training at civilian universities in conjunction with ACS for 24 months. ACS has moved from Berkely in 1907 to only NPS in the 1970s and 80s to its current form. ACS should be regionally focused and challenge a FAO to broaden their education.

**17. Command and General Staff College (CGSC) and National Intelligence University (NIU) can provide the same education as civilian universities.** This new FAO trap is emerging due to the decline of the ACS budget and is perpetuated by HRC and FAO Proponent staff members. Before moving further in this direction, we need an in-depth analysis of the long-term effects of this decision. CGSC and NIU will only provide FAOs with strategy-focused classes, not regionally focused classes, which is required by DA PAM 600-3. I believe beginning this trend will negate the entire purpose of sending FAOs to ACS and lead to a complete elimination of ACS for FAOs.

### **Promotions**

**18. FAOs are only promoted if they have command or key designated jobs such as**

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**Battalion (BN) S3.** This myth is usually perpetuated by FAOs who became FAOs but still have very grounded feelings for their basic branches. They have not walked away from being in an Army unit anymore. Significantly few FAOs were a BN S3 or a BN Executive Officer, and now almost none were a BN Commander. FAO has the highest promotion rate to Major in the Army, one of the top five highest promotion rates to Lieutenant Colonel (LTC), and one of the highest to Colonel. The Army is an up-or-out system; unfortunately, not all FAOs will promote in it. If you don't get promoted as a FAO it is not because you weren't a commander or a BN S3.

**19. The FAO IRT OER does not matter.**  
**This trap is perpetuated by IRT FAOs who likely OER shopped and received a Most Qualified (MQ) during IRT.**  
Overall, the FAO IRT OER does matter, and it likely contributes directly to our Selective Continuation (SELCON) numbers and low Senior Service College (SSC) numbers. I wrote a ten-page analysis of this issue and distributed it to the FAO GOSC and Council of Colonels. They have seemed to ignore my recommendations because of legacy biases.

**20. FAOs should be commanders, e.g., dual-tracked. FAOs perpetuate this myth who are closely attached to their basic branch or are the FAOs who still need to fully transfer over to being a FAO.**  
These FAOs fear their lack of FAO skills is causing them not to be promoted. Some regret becoming

FAOs. The truth of this trap is that all the problems that FAOs used to have ended in 1997 when the Army ended the dual-track process. Since 1997, FAO promotions have gone through the roof, and FAOs began to execute multiple FAO billets, refining our trade more and more.

## Foreign Staff Colleges

**21. A FAO attending a foreign staff college gets the same experience as a regular IRT FAO.** This trap is usually perpetuated by FAOs who went to foreign staff colleges and likely is rebutted by FAOs who did a traditional twelve-month IRT with extensive travel. FAOs who do foreign staff college are some of the best linguists I have encountered in FAO, but most lack experience in their region until their second or third tours. Not all foreign staff colleges give intermediate level education (ILE) credit, so why do we send our FAOs there? I would eliminate all staff colleges that are over six months.

**22. FAOs go to these schools because the Army wants FAOs to go.** Almost all FAOs are going to a foreign staff college because the FAO Proponent decided FAOs should go to that country's staff college, not because the country formally requested it to the Army G 3/5/7 staff. The Army does not direct FAOs to go to any foreign ILEs. The Army does send FAOs to foreign war colleges solely based on our abilities to speak the language of the war college. Most foreign staff college

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assignments start with a good idea from a FAO on the country team, likely those who went to another foreign staff college. The Army staff has little to no input in the FAO Proponent committing the Army to sending FAOs to these staff colleges. Most are FAO Proponent-driven decisions without an accurate analysis of whether or not the pipeline can and should sustain this commitment.

## Other Random Traps

**23. Army senior leaders do not value FAOs. FAOs who perpetuate this myth tend to be currently serving under one of the rare Army General Officers who has it out for FAOs.** Army senior leaders do not value the bad FAOs they experience when they travel overseas to an embassy and then have dinner with a young Major or Lieutenant Colonel (LTC), who perpetuates one of the many myths mentioned above. That FAO likely looks fat in their uniform, or could not speak their language well, etc. Army senior leaders have high expectations of FAOs. Unfortunately, the functional area has some FAOs in our ranks who should never be assigned to a position that puts them before a senior Army leader. Army senior leaders value Army FAOs, quit perpetuating this myth!

**24. FAO training is expensive, and we must make it cheaper.** Is it? How expensive is FAO training? Eliminating salary and PCS costs and any training costs that any other Army officer would go through, what costs does the Army

pay for FAOs? I saw the budget from G 3/5/7 and it was less than \$10M for Army FAO training. This did not include PCS, Language, ACS, JMAS, SCO, etc. First, language training, which also pays for other branches, but it does pay a large percentage of language training at DLI for Army FAOs (about 20%, but check my math). Next, ACS, yes, a large percentage of the ACS budget is Army FAOs, which should continue. However, we now have the Advanced Strategic Planning Policy (ASP3) PhD program (which I would de-fund completely) and other branches that have used ACS as a retention requirement since the officer bonuses in 2008. Then IRT, other than the \$40,000 TDY costs, the expensive embassy costs, say around \$10 to \$15 million a year from the G 3/5/7's budget. If you compare Army FAO training costs to Army SF Officer training costs, it would be minuscule. The actual cost to Soldier ratio is minimal for what the Army gets out of Army FAOs. We are at fault for perpetuating this myth as an Army FAO community. The exact cost is at G 3/5/7, and we must better justify the budget. That is where we are failing because we have a LTC from FAO Proponent fighting this fight to a three-star. Army FAO training is tiny compared to other functional areas and branch expenses. Quit promoting this myth, it is wrong. I will admit, I've promoted this myth, and I was wrong to do so. Imagine the cost of one tank company's Table 8 or 9 and compare that against the entire Army FAO training program. The cost is not

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comparable. Army FAOs are the cheapest versus the most expensive Army Officers the United States Army can train.

**25. FA48 FAO should cone its officers solely as attaché or security cooperation officers.** This trap is usually perpetuated for the security cooperation aspect by 48Bs as they almost all spend time doing SCO work during IRT, and most of their country team assignments early on are in the SCO world. The attaché focus tends to come from the 48Es, who are over represented by attachés. You could also add staff coned, which tends to go from 48Ps because they are almost all staff officers until they make LTC, and some spend their entire careers on staff.

**FAO already has a 39% acceptance rate, making it any harder, and we would not make our mission.**

**26. We should be more selective in our selection process.** This bias is usually from a West Point graduate who speaks two to three languages fluently or attended an Ivy League graduate school. These officers think all FAOs should be as well-groomed as they are. FAO already has a 39% acceptance rate, making it any harder, and we would not make our mission. I think we should return to requiring the Graduate Record Examination again, providing a writing sample, etc. The interviews that began a few years ago assisted in making the VTIP process more effective. Although FAO Proponent

insisted upon having the interviews, after two people PCS'd it then became an HRC responsibility.

**27. The assignment process needs to allow us proper transparency.** This trap is always from the officer who did not get the job they wanted, likely because the officer interviewed horribly or asked only for a European assignment when they were an African FAO.

**28. JMAS should not be a PCS. This FAO is not a trap or a myth, but FAOs often misunderstand why this is a current policy.** The Army's minimum requirement for a PCS is twenty weeks or more of training. Therefore, if a FAO is only going to the JMAS course (4 months) and has no other follow-on training, such as language training, it is not technically required to PCS to JMAS according to Army Regulations. This requirement is new (~5 years), and the Defense Attaché Service (DAS) directs it. There are financial implications to this change, and undoing the change also has financial implications. Allowing officers to PCS to JMAS, if they have other training or enable other officers to be on temporary duty (TDY) en route, is a simple math equation that should be done by HRC and permitted by the DAS. The Army Training Requirements and Resources System (ATTARS) system allocates this status, which then allocates Army funding for training. HRC should request that the DAS withdraw this requirement and allow HRC to determine PCS versus

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TDY based on the officer's timeline and requirements. It will likely take years or this decision to come to fruition as the Army will need to do a Program Objective Memorandum (POM) for more TDY funds. However, the effects of this requirement have been a standard year-long PCS into the NCR region and excessive moves or separations of FAO families.

**29. Post-VTIP FAO transfers: I did not need this training because I can already fully execute FAO duties.** We should be methodical and judicious when accepting transfers after the VTIP. From Civil Affairs to other branches, FAO FA48 should deliberately debate and defend against officers requesting to transfer to FA48 post the VTIP. There will be GO influences, and those cases should be adjudicated at the FAO GOSC level because, previously, G-35 GOs have tried to influence transitions. If the officer's situation creates too much friction, then the FA48 community should move on and accept them. One officer of 1,200 is negligible. These are the areas where FA48 will receive small and minor requests, almost always with GO involvement, and we should entertain the request and move on. None of those officers will be true FAOs, and those officers will likely never be FAO GOs. Overall, too often, one Army GO conflicts with FA48 and demands things, and we overestimate their request when we should entertain their biases and move on. Most may be able to execute the duties we expect of a FAO. However, a Civil Affairs LTC who requests to transfer over the same

year as their O6 board should be denied because he intended to move to FAO to get promoted, not actually to be an FAO.

## Conclusion

I hope this article has hit every single Army FAO bias or opinion. I challenge anyone to prove me wrong in any future articles that don't express their personal experience. That is where the heart of my FAO traps exist. FAOs write articles projecting a thesis that is often based on their personal experience. Although those experiences are key, they are not necessarily academic or holistic to the entire functional area. I hope this journal moves beyond these FAO traps, and I challenge you to write beyond these traps.

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## Wes Chaney, Lieutenant Colonel USA, sub-Saharan FAO



Lieutenant Colonel Andrus (Wes) Chaney is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army in 2001. He has served in leadership positions in the 1st Infantry Division as an Infantry Rifle Platoon Leader, Company Executive Officer, Battalion Logistics Officer, and as a Company Commander three times. During this time, he deployed to Kosovo in support of Task Force Falcon, to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, and to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Upon successful completion of company command LTC Chaney was selected to become a Foreign Area Officer specializing in sub-Saharan Africa. LTC Chaney most recently served as the U.S. Army Human Resources Command as the U.S. Army Foreign Area Officer.

Branch Chief. His current assignment is at the U.S. Army Security Assistance Command, Director CENTCOM Regional Operations. Other notable assignments include service in Afghanistan as a Military Transition Team leader advising, training and mentoring the Afghan National Military; the Office of Security Cooperation Chief for the United States Embassy Djibouti; International Military Affairs Officer for Djibouti, Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya, and South-East Africa Branch Chief in the Security Cooperation Directorate, G 3/5/7, U.S. Army Africa/Southern European Task Force, Vicenza, Italy, and Senior Defense Official / Defense Attaché to Cote d'Ivoire.

LTC Chaney's military education includes the Infantry Officer's Basic and Captain's Career courses, Bradley Mechanized Leaders Course, U.S. Army Airborne and Pathfinder courses, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, the Defense Language Institute French course, and the U.S. Army War College Defense Strategy and Defense Planners Courses. LTC Chaney holds a Bachelor's of Arts degree in political science from UNC-Charlotte, a Master's in International Public Policy with a concentration in African Studies from The Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) in Washington, D.C., and a Master's in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College.



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