



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
3000 MARINE CORPS PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON DC 20350-3000

NOTICE OF INCORRECT PCN

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MARINE CORPS ORDER 1540.33

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps  
To: Distribution List

Subj: INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS PROGRAM

Ref: See enclosure (1)

Encl: (1) References  
(2) International Affairs Program Policies/Procedures

1. Situation. The Marine Corps must maintain a close network of partners and allies capable of assisting the United States in deterring and defeating our adversaries throughout the continuums of competition and conflict. This Order promulgates policy and assigns responsibilities for the Marine Corps Foreign Area Officer (FAO), Regional Affairs Officer (RAO), and Foreign Area Staff Non-Commissioned Officer (FAS) programs, collectively referred to as the International Affairs Program (IAP).

a. The IAP Office manages, trains, and tracks Marines who enter the FAO, RAO, and FAS programs in accordance with references (a) through (r).

(1) The IAP provides Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in international and Political-Military (pol-mil) affairs, Security Cooperation (SC), and interagency coordination. IAP SMEs also possess advanced Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture (LREC) skills that help commanders at all levels sense and make sense of ally, partner, and competitor motives and actions. IAP Marines serve as critical enablers across the land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace operational domains.

(2) These SMEs provide critical warfighting capabilities that strengthen alliances and evolve partnerships into extended networks capable of strategic effects that advance U.S. Military objectives.

b. Cancellation. MCO 1520.11F

2. Mission. This Order promulgates policy and assigns responsibilities for the execution and management of Marine Corps FAO, RAO, and FAS programs, to support Marine Corps Air-Ground Task Force

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(MAGTF), joint, interagency, international, and multinational planning, operational, SC, and intelligence requirements. These requirements include assignments working directly with U.S. Commanders as well as critical allies and partners as advisors, planners, and SC SMEs. This Order is in accordance with references (a) through (r).

### 3. Execution

#### a. Commander's Intent and Concept of Operations

(1) Commander's Intent. The intent of the Marine Corps IAP is to meet operational and SC requirements as established by the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV), Geographic Combatant Commanders, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) Planning Guidance and SC strategy. IAP Marines will accomplish this by employing their international affairs, pol-mil and LREC expertise to support commanders in the development, strengthening, and management of critical international partnerships to create an asymmetric advantage across the spectrums of competition and conflict.

#### (2) Concept of Operations

(a) Main Effort. Marines are the Main Effort for the IAP. Mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships are an enduring strength for the United States and remain critical to achieving national security objectives. Incorporating ally and partner perspectives, competencies, and advantages at every stage of planning helps strengthen these ties. FAOs, RAOs, and FAS' hold critical and unique billets within all regionally aligned Marine Forces (MARFOR), Marine Expeditionary Forces, and the Joint Force. Their education and training provide commanders with critical insights into how our allies, partners, competitors, and adversaries perceive challenges in an ever-changing geopolitical landscape.

1. IAP Marines will apply their specialized pol-mil and regional expertise to assist commanders at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels in the development and management of critical international partnerships. Such partnerships enable regional access and support for Stand In Forces (SIF), Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations (EABO), and Distributed Maritime Operations (DMO).

2. IAP Marines directly contribute to a durable, asymmetric advantage that creates opportunity across the continuum of competition and conflict.

3. IAP Marines provide low cost, high impact planning and regional expertise to enable leaders to sense and make sense of ally, partner, competitor, and adversary actions. IAP Marines' advanced education and regional experience can enhance commanders' situational awareness and provide a competitive advantage when

leveraging relationships to execute SIF, EABO, and distributed operations as described in reference (b).

(b) Supporting Effort (SE) #1. SE #1 is the IAP Office. The IAP Office will manage the FAO, RAO, and FAS programs and coordinate the selection, training, assignment, and tracking of Marines who specialize in international affairs.

(c) SE #2. SE #2 are the educational institutions and In Region Training (IRT) locations that provide training to IAP Marines through academic programs and regional experience. Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), Defense Language Institute (DLI), and IRT sites provide IAP Marines with the knowledge, skills and attitudes which form the basis for this capability.

(d) SE #3. SE #3 is Manpower Management Division (MM). MM, in coordination with the IAP Office, assigns IAP Marines to IAP coded billets based on the needs of the Marine Corps.

b. Subordinate Element Tasks

(1) Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies and Operations (DC PP&O). Serves as overall administrator of the IAP. See Chapter 1 of Enclosure (2) for further information.

(2) Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (DC M&RA). Provide personnel and selection board support. See Chapter 1 of Enclosure (2) for further information.

(3) Deputy Commandant for Aviation (DC A)

(a) Coordinate with DC PP&O and DC M&RA on aviation related IAP matters.

(b) In coordination with DC PP&O, interface with the Department of Defense (DoD), Joint Staff, other services, and the interagency on all aviation related IAP matters.

(c) Review aviation billets that require pol-mil expertise, SC planning and oversight familiarity, and/or LREC skills for IAP billet coding via the Total Force Structure Process (TFSP).

(4) Deputy Commandant for Combat Development and Integration (DC CD&I). In conjunction with the IAP Office, identify Table of Organization (T/O) billets, also referred to as Billet Identification Codes (BICs), that require pol-mil expertise, SC planning and oversight familiarity, and/or LREC competencies for IAP billet coding via the TFSP.

(5) Deputy Commandant for Installations and Logistics (DC I&L) Family Housing Operations and Maintenance, Navy and Marine Corps

appropriation should be used to fund U.S. Department of State (DOS), embassy directed leases for family housing, i.e., military personnel with accompanying spouse and/or other dependents. DC I&L is responsible for the overall administration of the Family Housing Program and, with respect to and in consultation with the IAP, will submit Program Objective Memorandum (POM) initiatives, related to family housing costs, to the Program Objective Memorandum Working Group (PWG) and Program Evaluation Board (PEB). DC, I&L will also submit related budget exhibits to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Financial Management and Comptroller).

(6) Deputy Commandant for Information (DC I). Coordinate and provide support regarding language training, bonuses, and matters involving intelligence billets for IAP personnel. See Chapter 1 of Enclosure 2 for further information.

(7) Commanding General, Training and Education Command (CG, TECOM)

(a) Provide administrative oversight for IAP Marines assigned to NPS and the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) via the Commanding Officer (CO), Marine Detachment (MARDET), DLI.

(b) CG, TECOM will pay all tuition, book stipends, and required academic fees for Marines participating in the degree portion of study track programs. Book stipends will be disbursed automatically after reporting to NPS using the student code for Graduate Education Programs in the Marine Corps Total Force System.

(8) Commander, Marine Forces Reserve (CDR, MARFORRES)

(a) Identify and communicate pol-mil, LREC, and SC planning and oversight billet requirements to the IAP Office, for units such as Civil Affairs or regionally focused rotational forces for IAP billet coding.

(b) Encourage eligible and qualified Marines to pursue IAP Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) designation through the experience track.

(c) Identify T/O billets/BICs that require pol-mil, SC planning and oversight familiarity, and/or LREC competencies for mission essential tasks via the TFSP.

(d) Annually assess billet requirements in coordination with the IAP Office.

(9) Commanders, Regional Marine Forces

(a) Identify T/O billets/BICs that require pol-mil expertise, SC planning and oversight familiarity, and/or LREC competencies for IAP billet coding via the TFSP.

(b) Coordinate FAO-coded SC Officer requirements with supported Combatant Commands.

(c) Annually assess IAP billet requirements in coordination with the IAP Office.

(d) Support IAP Marines assigned within their Area of Responsibility (AOR) with relevant country and operational information upon request.

(e) Maintain situational awareness of IAP personnel and activities within the AOR.

(f) Provide administrative support and serve as the General Court Martial Convening Authority for IAP Marines assigned within their AOR.

(10) Commanders, Functional Marine Forces

(a) Identify T/O billets/BICs that require pol-mil expertise, SC planning and oversight familiarity, and/or LREC competencies for mission essential tasks via the TFSP.

(b) Annually assess billet requirements in coordination with the IAP Office.

(11) Marine Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC)

(a) Identify T/O billets/BICs that require pol-mil expertise, SC planning and oversight familiarity, or LREC skills for mission essential tasks via the TFSP.

(b) Annually assess billet requirements in coordination with the IAP Office.

4. Administration and Logistics

a. Records Management. Records created as a result of this Order shall be managed according to National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)-approved dispositions in reference (o), SECNAV M-5210.1, to ensure proper maintenance, use, accessibility, and preservation, regardless of format or medium. Records disposition schedules are located on the Department of the Navy/Assistant for Administration (DON/AA), Directives and Records Management Division (DRMD) portal page at:

<https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/Records-and-Information-Management/Approved%20Record%20Schedules/Forms/AllItems.aspx>. Refer

to reference (p), MCO 5210.11F, for Marine Corps records management policy and procedures.

b. Privacy Act. Any misuse or unauthorized disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) may result in both civil and criminal penalties. The Department of the Navy (DON) recognizes that the privacy of an individual is a personal and fundamental right that shall be respected and protected. The DON's need to collect, use, maintain, or disseminate PII about individuals for purposes of discharging its statutory responsibilities shall be balanced against the individuals' right to be protected against unwarranted invasion of privacy. All collection, use, maintenance, or dissemination of PII shall be in accordance with reference (q), the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. § 552a), as amended, and implemented in reference (r), SECNAVINST 5211.5F.

c. Forms. No forms used in this Order.

d. Records Dispositions

(1) This Order is assigned record schedule 5000-8.

(2) No records schedules are used within this Order.

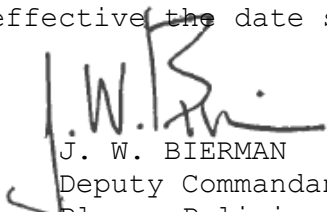
e. Updates. Updates made to this Order shall be done in accordance with the current iteration of MCO 5215.1, Marine Corps Directives Management Program.

f. Recommendations. Recommendations concerning the contents of this Order may be forwarded to Commandant of the Marine Corps, Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies and Operations, Strategy and Plans, International Affairs Branch via IAPMarine@usmc.mil.

## 5. Command and Signal

a. Command. This Order is applicable to the Marine Corps Total Force.

b. Signal. This Order is effective the date signed.

  
J. W. BIERMAN  
Deputy Commandant for  
Plans, Policies and Operations

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References

- (a) DoDD 5160.41E CH-2, "Defense Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture(LREC) Program" August 25, 2020
- (b) 38<sup>th</sup> Commandant of the Marine Corps Planning Guidance
- (c) CJCSI 3126.01C "Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture Capability Identification, Planning, and Sourcing", March 8, 2023
- (d) DoDI 1315.20, "Management of the DoD Foreign Area Officer Program" March 25, 2022
- (e) MCO 1550.25A
- (f) MCO 1230.5C
- (g) MCO 5710.6D
- (h) MCO 1524.1
- (i) MCO 7300.21B
- (j) SECNAVINST 1301.7B
- (k) MCO 7220.52F
- (l) MCO 1610.7A
- (m) DOS 13 FAM 2011.4, "Mandatory Training Preparatory to Going Abroad", April 01, 2022
- (n) MCO 1300.8 Change 1
- (o) SECNAV M-5210.1
- (p) MCO 5210.11F
- (q) 5 U.S.C. 552a
- (r) SECNAVINST 5211.5F



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## Chapter 1

### Roles and Responsibilities

1. Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies and Operations (DC PP&O).  
As overall administrator of the IAP:

a. Designate the Strategy and Plans Division (PL), International Affairs Branch (PLU) to serve as the Occupational Field sponsor and MOS manager for all IAP Additional Military Occupational Specialties (AMOS) and Free Military Occupational Specialties (FMOS).

b. Coordinate with DC M&RA to select new members for the IAP and ensure all Marine Corps, DON, and DoD requirements are fulfilled.

c. Provide a board member to both the Commandant's Professional Intermediate-level Education Board (CPIB) and Commandant's Career Level Education Board (CCLEB).

d. Conduct quarterly experience track selection panels to identify, screen, and select Marines who already possess the required FAO, RAO, and FAS qualifications for IAP MOS designation.

e. Conduct annual FAS study track selection panel in coordination with Manpower Management Division Enlisted Assignments (MMEA).

f. Coordinate with DC M&RA on IAP matters to include:

(1) Selection;

(2) Utilization, slating, and assignment;

(3) Designation of billets requiring language and/or pol-mil expertise.

g. Coordinate with DC I to establish foreign language quotas for IAP language training at DLIFLC prior to and in conjunction with completion of the annual selection of IAP Marines.

h. Coordinate IRT quotas for required personal protection courses.

i. Coordinate with the DOS to establish IRT sites within the Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché (SDO/DATT) offices of U.S. Embassies abroad. Submit all IAP National Security Decision Directive 38 (NSDD-38) requests to the DOS via the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of the Navy for Plans, Policy, Oversight, and Integration. Coordinate all International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) costs associated with IRT of IAP Marines.

j. Annually review all external billets to determine their suitability as IAP assignments.

k. Interface with the DoD, Joint Staff, other services, and the interagency on all IAP matters.

l. Develop a budget for the IAP and provide funding data and funding requests to the PEB Chair for presentation to the PWG based on cost information provided by the IAP Coordinator.

(1) Provide a detailed funding profile for the IAP to the PEB and PWG each year for the next scheduled POM initiative and budget to cover all programs, to include associated travel and expenses in accordance with reference (i). As required by the Deputy Commandant, Programs and Resources, provide updates regarding the IAP study-track profile.

(2) Provide a detailed funding profile for projected FAO IRT ICASS costs to the PEB and PWG each year for the next scheduled POM initiative and budget.

m. Coordinate housing costs for accompanied IAP Marines with DC I&L.

(1) Conduct semi-annual review of family housing costs with DC I&L.

(2) Submit budget requests and funding data requests for POM development for Family Housing Appropriation for projected IAP participants with dependents to accurately account for embassy directed housing.

(3) Provide a detailed funding profile for the IAP to DC I&L for each year of the next scheduled POM and budget to cover all costs related to the Family Housing Program, to include lease, make-ready, furniture buy-in, and utilities expenses.

(4) For costs related to the Family Housing Program (Embassy directed housing), provide a detailed funding profile for the projected FAO IRT ICASS costs to HQMC I&L.

(5) Submit a quarterly receiving report for every Marine occupying DOS leased housing to DC I&L outlining the goods and services (leasing, utilities, furniture buy-in, and make ready costs) they have received to date.

n. Develop a budget for, administer funding, and coordinate the disbursement of funds to support IAP IRT and language sustainment training.

(1) Provide for the administration of all funding and reimbursements allocated to support IAP Marines conducting IRT in

accordance with current Memorandum of Understanding and this Order to include funding to support immersion Temporary Additional Duty (TAD) and tuition for in-region language training.

(2) Submit an estimate of funds required to support all IAP Marines conducting IRT for the next fiscal year to the Branch Head, PLU no later than 1 June of each fiscal year for further submission to PEB and PWG.

o. Provide IAP Marines beginning IRT with fiscal and administrative briefings and ensure that appropriate security briefings are completed.

p. Maintain the Marine Corps IAP website.

q. Project Marine Corps requirements for IAP Marines in consultation with DC I and DC M&RA Manpower Management Division Officer Assignments-3 (MMOA-3) and MMEA-25. Annual slating of CPIB and CCLEB selectees for FAO and RAO will be based on these projections, as will the selection of Marines to the FAS program.

r. Coordinate with regional MARFORs to ensure awareness of IAP Marines operating in their respective AORs.

s. Identify T/O billets/BICs that require pol-mil expertise, SC planning and oversight familiarity, and/or LREC competencies for IAP billet coding.

## 2. Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (DC M&RA)

a. Coordinate with the IAP Office for FAO and RAO quotas and slating for CPIB and CCLEB.

b. Provide a member for the annual FAS selection panel.

c. Coordinate with the IAP Office to conduct IAP slating panels to assign qualified Marines to IAP designated and other pol-mil billets in accordance with the Authorized Strength Report and reference (n). IAP Marines will be the primary nominees for selection to serve in joint, interagency, and service assignments that involve significant interaction with foreign governments and their militaries, foreign nationals, foreign entities, or international organizations, per reference (j).

d. Ensure that all IAP AMOS designations resulting from experience track selection panels are entered into the Marine Corps Total Force System.

e. Provide relevant manpower data to support IAP program management as requested.

f. Assign IAP Marines to IAP billets when they are due for required utilization tours in accordance with reference (n).

g. Ensure that IAP Marines who return to the operating forces after IRT are assigned to commands that are operationally oriented toward their region of expertise in accordance with reference (n). This will enable them to leverage their skills while simultaneously building Primary Military Occupational Specialty (PMOS) credibility.

h. Coordinate with PLU to identify T/O billets/BICs that require pol-mil expertise, SC planning and oversight certifications, and LREC competencies for IAP billet coding.

3. Deputy Commandant for Information (DC I)

a. Coordinate with the IAP Office on all IAP language and regional selection policy matters as informed by strategic language list and five-year forecast.

b. Coordinate with DC PP&O and DC M&RA on intelligence related IAP matters.

c. Coordinate, in conjunction with the IAP Office, with the U.S. Army (DoD Executive Agent for foreign language training) to assign Marine quotas at DLIFLC to FAOs and other IAP Marines as required.

d. Provide IAP Marines beginning IRT with relevant country and intelligence briefings at Marine Corps Intelligence Activity in coordination with the IAP Office.

e. Coordinate Tier 5 (T5) investigation requirements to enable IAP Marine participation in MAGTF planning, operations, SC, and intelligence efforts.

f. Annually review all FAO, pol-mil affairs, and joint billets for currency and recommended changes as may be required.

## Chapter 2

### General Policies and Procedures

1. Scope. To establish policy and procedures for the accession, training, designation, and utilization of IAP Marines. IAP Marines employ their international affairs, pol-mil, and LREC expertise to advise and enable commanders at all levels to develop, strengthen, and maintain critical alliances and partnerships needed to execute operations throughout the continuum of competition and conflict.

a. IAP Marines leverage their specialized education, training, and experience to assist commanders at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels to navigate complex geopolitical landscapes and human terrain.

b. The IAP serves as the occupational field sponsor for the following MOSs:

(1) 8220 Political-Military (pol-mil) Officer. The Political-Military Officer MOS is an FMOS used to identify RAOs in training until they are designated in a regional sub-specialty, Marines participating in Foreign Professional Military Education (FPME), Personnel Exchange Program participants in English-speaking countries and general RAO billets. Additionally, Marines who serve in non-regionally affiliated pol-mil affairs billets within the contiguous United States which do not require the ability to speak a secondary language may qualify for the MOS. Examples of such billets include: legislative affairs, liaison officer, interagency, academic, or other policy-related fellowships focused on international or pol-mil affairs.

(2) 822x Regional Affairs Officer (RAO). Marine Officers will qualify for a region-specific 822x AMOS:

(a) After successful completion of graduate level education resulting in a master's or doctoral degree focused on, but not limited to, the historical, political, military or security, cultural, sociological, scientific or technical, economic, and geographic factors of specific foreign countries and regions; or

(b) After completion of an FPME, or Military Personnel Exchange Program (MPEP) tour in an English-speaking country; or,

(c) Officers already in possession of a qualifying master's degree from a regionally accredited institution resulting in significant regional expertise may seek RAO designation through the experience track.

(3) 824X Foreign Area Officer (FAO). Per references (d) and (j), Marine Officers will qualify for a region-specific 824X AMOS:

(a) Upon successful completion of graduate-level education resulting in a master's or doctoral degree focused on, but not limited to, the historical, political, military or security, cultural, sociological, scientific or technical, economic, and geographic factors of specific foreign countries and regions; and,

(b) Achievement of a minimum 2/2/1+ Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT)/Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) score in a regionally aligned language; and

(c) Demonstrating significant regional expertise which includes, but is not limited to, knowledge of the historical, political, military or security, cultural, sociological, scientific or technical, economic, and geographic factors of the designated region; and,

(d) Experience (IRT) of at least 6 months in the designated region of specialty. This training involves significant interaction with the populations and institutions in the region(s) which the FAO specializes.

(e) Officers already in possession of the required language skills, significant regional expertise, and a qualifying master's or doctoral degree from a regionally accredited institution may seek FAO designation through the experience track.

(4) 823X Foreign Area Staff Non-Commissioned Officer (FAS). The FAS MOS may only be assigned as an FMOS and is available to all Staff Non-Commissioned Officers (SNCO) per the eligibility criteria defined in Chapter 5.

(a) SNCOs will qualify for a region-specific 823x FMOS upon successful completion of graduate level regional education or an assigned pol-mil training program, language training, and IRT. SNCOs already in possession of language skills, regional expertise, and a minimum of an associate degree, or equivalent credits from a regionally accredited institution may seek FAS designation through the Experience Track.

(b) SNCOs that successfully complete FPME, MPEP, and SC tours may also apply for the Experience Track and applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis. SNCOs assigned to billets in English-speaking countries may apply for an exception to the foreign language requirement if they are otherwise qualified for a region-specific FAS AMOS.

c. Career Management Considerations

(1) IAP Marines can expect to perform more than one pol-mil or SC-related assignment during their careers. IAP Marines will follow a



dual-track career assignment pattern, alternating between PMOS and pol-mil or SC-designated billets.

(2) IAP Marines must remain proficient in their PMOS and thereby remain competitive for promotion by completing operating forces tours at each pay grade.

(3) Throughout their careers, FAOs, RAOs and FASs must be prepared to respond to emerging Marine Corps and Joint pol-mil and SC requirements regardless of billet.

(4) The nature of the dual-track career pattern may preclude attendance at in-residence Professional Military Education (PME). Officers and SNCOs selected for the IAP should immediately enroll in the grade appropriate non-resident PME course, if not already complete.

## 2. General Eligibility Requirements

a. To be eligible for FAO or RAO selection/designation, Active and Reserve component officers must:

- (1) Be fully qualified in PMOS
- (2) Hold U.S. citizenship
- (3) Possess a Secret security clearance

b. To be eligible for FAS selection or designation, Active and Reserve component SNCOs must:

- (1) Be in the active component
- (2) Be fully qualified in PMOS
- (3) Hold U.S. citizenship

3. Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) Pathways. Marines may achieve IAP MOS designation through a study track or experience track.

a. Study Track. A multi-phase program for active-duty personnel, designed to develop the international affairs, pol-mil, SC, and LREC expertise required for each IAP MOS. Prospective FAO and FAS Marines will complete all three phases of training and phase IV, Utilization Tour, outlined below, while prospective RAOs will only complete Phase I, Graduate Education, and phase IV, Utilization Tour. Reserve Marines are ineligible for the study track program.

(1) Phase I - Regionally-focused graduate education resulting in a Master of Arts degree (FAOs and RAOs) or graduate certificate in Security Studies (FAS candidates holding a bachelor's degree) at NPS. FASs without a bachelor's degree will attend alternate pol-mil and

international affairs training at other institutions. Marines attending NPS follow one of four Regional Security Studies curricula within the Graduate School of International and Defense Studies, Department of National Security Affairs depicted in Table 1.

Curriculum 681	Middle East, South Asia, and Africa
Curriculum 682	Far east, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific
Curriculum 683	Western Hemisphere
Curriculum 684	Europe and Eurasia

Table 1: Naval Postgraduate School Graduate School of International and Defense Studies Regional Security Studies Curricula

(2) Phase II - Language training consists of 24-63 week courses at the DLIFLC (FAOs only), or immersive, in-region language training (FAS only).

(3) Phase III - IRT will enhance pol-mil understanding and experience through immersion in the Marines' assigned region. Marines will visit U.S. Embassies to learn about U.S. Embassy Country Team operations (FAO and FAS only).

(a) FAOs and FASs will work to develop an understanding of complex regional and cultural issues while immersed in their assigned region. Marines will refine language skills through personal interaction with foreign populations and build on the regional education gained during Phases I and II.

(b) The FAO IRT phase will last 1 year, and the FAS regional immersion will last 6 months.

(4) Phase IV - Utilization Assignment. After completion of training, study track IAP Marines will serve in designated IAP billets as part of their service obligation for participation in the program in accordance with references (h) and (n).

b. Experience Track

(1) The experience track enables active-duty and reserve personnel who already meet the education, language, and regional expertise requirements for an IAP MOS to apply for MOS designation after review and selection by an experience track selection board.

(2) FAOs must meet qualifications as outlined in references (d) and (j). This Order defines selection criteria for the RAO and FAS programs. Reserve personnel may only obtain IAP MOS designation through the experience track.

(3) Applicants who possess language skills relevant to the region they are applying for (FAO and FAS only), a regionally focused or international relations related graduate degree (FAO and RAO) or an associate degree or at least 60 credit hours (FAS), and regional pol-

mil expertise should request IAP MOS designation via the quarterly experience track selection panel.

(4) Marines assigned to one of the following programs may receive IAP designation upon achievement of specific IAP MOS requirements. Notify the IAP Office via the IAPMarine@usmc.mil mailbox once specific IAP MOS qualifications are met for consideration by the next experience track selection panel.

- (a) Marine Corps PEP
- (b) FPME
- (c) Olmsted Scholar Program
- (d) Marine Corps Attaché Program

c. Constructive Credit Waivers (CCW)

(1) Marines who lack a qualifying graduate degree (FAO, RAO), associate degree, or 60 credits (FAS), but can demonstrate significant regional and/or pol-mil expertise may apply for a CCW of the degree requirement. In accordance with references (d) and (J), the Director, Strategy and Plans (Dir, PL), DC PP&O holds the authority to grant CCW's for the FAO, RAO and FAS programs.

(2) The experience track selection panel will consider CCW applications on a case-by-case basis to determine if the stated qualifications meet the threshold to qualify for a CCW before sending to Dir, PL for approval.

(3) CCW applications require the endorsement of the first O-6 in the Marine's chain of command. This endorsement must address the Marine's qualifications for a CCW. The Marine should provide as much detail as possible regarding their previous experience and qualifications. Significant regional and/or pol-mil expertise may be established through experiences that include but are not limited to:

- (a) Regional component command assignment
- (b) Overseas civil affairs tour
- (c) Military training team tour
- (d) Military interpreter tour
- (e) Marine Corps Embassy Security Group assignments
- (f) Study abroad or degree from a foreign university
- (g) Missionary work

(h) Peace Corps experience

(i) Extensive foreign travel in a particular region

4. Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) Management. Personnel who meet the MOS qualifications through the study or experience track will receive a region-specific AMOS (Officers) or FMOS (Enlisted) according to the IAP MOS designations and regional identifiers listed in table 2.

MOS	Designation
8220	Political Military Officer
822X	Regional Affairs Officer (regions broken out below)
823X	Foreign Area SNCO (regions broken out below)
824X	Foreign Area Officer (regions broken out below)
X=0	Basic/In training
X=1	Western Hemisphere (Spanish/Portuguese-Brazilian/French/Creole-Haitian)
X=2	Eurasia (Russian/Belorussian/Ukrainian/Latvian/Lithuanian/Estonian/ Armenian/Georgian/Azeri/Uzbek)
X=3	Northeast Asia (Chinese [Mandarin/Cantonese/Japanese/Korean])
X=4	Middle East (Arabic/Hebrew/Persian-Farsi/Kurmanji/Sorani)
X=5	Africa (Arabic/Swahili/French/Portuguese)
X=6	Southwest Asia (Persian-Dari/Pashto/Urdu/Hindi/Bengali)
X=7	Europe (Spanish/French/German/Greek/Turkish/Italian/Norwegian/ Czech/Polish/Bulgarian/Hungarian/Romanian/Serbo-Croatian)
X=8	Southeast Asia (Thai/Vietnamese/Cambodian- Khmer/Lao/Malay/Tagalog/Burmese/Indonesian)

Table 2: MOS Designations and Regional Identifiers

a. Marines may qualify for an unlimited number of regional designations and will receive each corresponding AMOS as appropriate.

b. To obtain additional regional designations, IAP Marines must meet the initial requirements for each region. Marines must maintain proficiency in their assigned language(s) to retain FAO and FAS AMOSs.

5. Language and Culture Training/Sustainment. In accordance with reference (c), LREC capabilities are critical warfighter competencies and enable mission effectiveness across the spectrum of conflict and competition.

a. FAO and FAS Marines should work to achieve 3/3/3 levels of proficiency in their assigned foreign language(s). To enable this, commanders must ensure that FAOs, regardless of billet, complete 40-80 hours of annual LREC sustainment/enhancement training in accordance with reference (d). Commanders should also enable and support RAO and FAS attendance at LREC and pol-mil sustainment training opportunities. DC PP&O will administer funds for LREC sustainment training for Marine

FAOs, RAOs, and FAS'. Marines who require remedial training and those preparing for an overseas assignment or deployment that will utilize their FAO/RAO/FAS skills will receive priority.

b. Language Skills/Testing. The Marine Corps tests and measures Marine language professionals' foreign language proficiency via the DLPT and OPI according to reference (e). Marines who take the DLPT and OPI will receive scores based on the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Scale.

(1) Per reference (e), Marines without existing regional language proficiency will take the Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB) to assess their potential to learn a foreign language. Marines selected for a program requiring language training (FAO and FAS) will be assigned a region and foreign language based on the minimum DLAB scores listed in Table 3.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Languages</u>	<u>Minimum DLAB Score</u>
I	Dutch Italian Spanish	French/Creole Portuguese Norwegian 95
II	German Romanian	Indonesian Malay 100
III	Ukranian Latvian Hebrew Swahili Bengali Greek Polish Persian-Farsi Persian-Dari Serbo-Croatian Tagalog Turkish Urdu Lao	Lithuanian Estonian Hindi Georgian Armenian Bulgarian Czech Kurmanji Russian Sorani Thai Uzbek Vietnamese Cambodian-Khmer 105
IV	Arabic Japanese Pashto	Chinese Korean 110

Table 3: Language Categories, Languages within each category, and Minimum DLAB Scores for Enrollment at DLIFLC

(2) Marines may arrange to complete language testing through local base education centers or the Marine Corps Foreign Language Program Manager at HQMC, DC I, Information and Intelligence Division, Intelligence Operations & Engagements Branch, Foreign Language Program Office.

(3) The goal for IAP Marines who complete language training at DLIFLC is to graduate with and maintain a minimum DLIFLC standard ILR score of two in two of the three modalities (Listening/Reading/Speaking) on the DLPT and OPI. This score equates to a limited functional proficiency in the target language which enables IAP Marines to communicate confidently on most work, social, and family topics. FAS' who receive alternate language training must graduate with and maintain a minimum of 1+/1+/1+ on the DLPT.

(4) When a Marine's foreign language certification will expire while deployed or assigned to an OCONUS location, and they are unable to access web-delivered testing, they may request an OCONUS waiver through the DC I, Intelligence Division per reference (f).

(5) FAOs and FASs must meet the criteria in reference (k) to qualify for a Foreign Language Proficiency Bonus.

c. Cultural Capabilities. Per reference (a), cultural capabilities are defined as "The skills and knowledge that enable personnel to adapt and function effectively in any culture to achieve mission success. This includes culture-general capabilities that promote effective development and use of regional expertise." IAP Marines will develop advanced understanding of cultural complexities so they may factor cultural issues into planning efforts and assist commanders with navigating complex human terrain and geopolitical environments.

d. Regional Expertise. Per reference (a), regional expertise is defined as "knowledge about a specific region of the world that focuses on, but is not limited to, the political, historical, cultural, sociological, economic, and geographic factors of that region." IAP Marines will develop and maintain an advanced understanding of the complex pol-mil affairs within their assigned regions and facilitate the planning and execution of pol-mil and military to military engagements, including joint operations and SC with allied and partner forces. This expertise may be developed through personal or professional experience.

6. Security Clearance. IAP Marines often serve in critical or special sensitive positions. All Marines holding an IAP 82XX MOS shall undergo a T5 Investigation to obtain eligibility for Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS/SCI) access. IAP Marines are required to maintain eligibility to access TS/SCI information regardless of billet requirements.

a. Marines selected for a study track program should coordinate with their Special Security Officer (SSO) to initiate a T5 investigation after selection.

b. Marines selected for IAP MOS designation through the experience track should coordinate with their SSO to initiate a T5 investigation after designation.

c. Marines selected for an IAP program who already hold a TS/SCI clearance will coordinate with their SSO to determine if a periodic reinvestigation is necessary. Marines that require a periodic reinvestigation shall work with their SSO to ensure it is initiated.

7. Passports. All Marines with an AMOS of 82XX shall maintain an active official (no-fee) passport to enable a rapid response capability for short notice usage. The requirement for official (maroon) or diplomatic (black) passports will be indicated on all assigning orders, including those for training, to allow for processing time.

#### 8. Additional Training

a. Security Cooperation (SC) Training. Reference (g) designates FAOs, RAOs, and FASs as SC Practitioners. All IAP Marines will complete the Security Cooperation Workforce Development Program's (SCWDP) minimum certification through the Defense Security Cooperation University (DSCU).

(1) This training is offered remotely and may be accessed through the DSCU website: <https://www.dscu.edu>.

(2) Study track FAOs and FASs will complete their initial SC training requirement by the end of IRT. Study track RAO's will complete initial SCWDP training before graduation from NPS. All IAP Marines selected through the experience track will complete the SCWDP training requirement within one year of IAP MOS designation.

(3) IAP Marines are encouraged to complete additional SC training and certifications as they progress through their career.

b. Joint Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Course. All FAOs are required to attend the Joint FAO Course held at DLIFLC in Monterey, CA, or an equivalent. RAOs and FASs are highly encouraged to attend if possible.

c. Foreign Affairs Counter Threat (FACT) Course. IAP Marines may be required to attend the FACT course in accordance with reference (m). The FACT Course is managed and administered by the DOS. FAOs and select FASs required to complete FACT training must do so before leaving for IRT and or regional immersion.

d. Additional Training as Required by Billet. Some IRT and utilization assignments may require additional training:

(1) Billet-Specific Security Cooperation (SC) Training. IAP Marines may be required to complete advanced SC training that is dependent on specific SC billet requirements.

(2) Intensive Regional Area Studies. IAP Marines may be required to attend courses at the DOS Foreign Service Institute. These courses focus on the nine DOS Regional Bureaus and offer insight into DOS' approach to international relations and diplomacy.



(3) Civil-Military Operations Training. The Marine Corps Civil-Military Operations School conducts Civil Affairs MOS courses as well as the Civil-Military Operations Planners Course. These courses provide a functional knowledge of planning, coordinating, and executing civil-military operations.

9. Service Obligation. Service obligations for officers selected for study track programs will be in accordance with reference (h). Service obligations for all IAP study track Marines commence on the date IAP training is completed.

a. IAP Marines designated through the experience track incur a service obligation of one utilization tour in a billet where the Marine may employ their international affairs, pol-mil, and LREC expertise.

b. A Marine who voluntarily or through misconduct fails to complete the active duty agreed upon shall be required to reimburse the cost of the education received, prorated for the obligated time served.

c. Further guidance on service obligations for officers and SNCOs is provided in each program-specific chapter.

10. Utilization. By applying for an IAP MOS, Marines indicate their interest and availability to serve in international affairs and pol-mil billets when not serving in a PMOS assignment.

a. MMOA, MMEA, and the IAP Office will administratively withdraw the IAP AMOS from officers and SNCOs who subsequently decline to serve in an international affairs or pol-mil billet.

b. Study track and experience track IAP Marines must complete at least one utilization tour in an IAP designated billet as part of their service obligation. IAP Marines in need of a utilization tour will receive priority for IAP assignments in accordance with reference (n). The nature and location of IAP assignments depend on several factors:

(1) Region of specialization and language requirements

(2) The Marine's grade

(3) Available billet vacancies during the period the Marine will graduate or be available for Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders

(4) Staffing priorities for commands with vacancies

(5) Primary occupational field needs

(6) The Marine's preferences

c. The IAP Office will meet with MMOA annually to slate IAP Marines eligible for PCS during the following calendar year for international affairs or pol-mil billets in accordance with reference (n). Marines should submit billet preferences according to the list of utilization billets provided annually by the IAP Office to the Marine IAP community.

11. Funding

a. General. DC PP&O (PLU) will allocate funds for use by FAOs and FAS' during IRT.

(1) Funds are to be used for continued language study (formal civilian or military schooling or tutor) and for regional immersion.

(2) Marines will receive TAD orders to complete IRT/regional immersion. The IAP Office maintains administrative control of IAP Marines during IRT/regional immersion. The IAP Office will administer IRT official travel reimbursement to IAP Marines via the Defense Travel System, or its replacement, and manage Government Travel Charge Card accounts.

b. In Region Training (IRT)/Regional Immersion Funding. The IAP Office will reimburse items such as foreign language tuition/fees, regional immersion, and specific embassy support costs (all of which must be approved in advance by the IAP Office) for those Marines participating in IRT/regional immersion. Due to the complexity of this process, Marines will receive fiscal, administrative, and security briefings prior to executing IRT/regional immersion orders.

c. IAP Marines will submit a detailed budget request for the entirety of their IRT/regional immersion period to the IAP Office for approval within 30 days of arrival in country.

## Chapter 3

### Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Policies and Procedures

1. Purpose. Per references (d) and (j) the FAO program provides joint force strategic effects operators experienced in international affairs to advance U.S Military objectives in foreign theaters. FAO's employ their advanced education, pol-mil expertise, and LREC competencies to strengthen international partnerships, sharpen operational plans, and enable commanders at all levels to navigate complex cultural and geopolitical terrain.

#### 2. Eligibility

##### a. Study Track Program Eligibility

(1) Study track FAOs are selected by the CCLEB. Per reference (h) officers must meet CCLEB eligibility requirements to qualify for the FAO program. An officer must be an active-duty First Lieutenant through Captain, with at least three, but not more than 11 years of commissioned service. The required grade is based on the officer's current or selected grade at the time Phase I training begins.

(2) Further guidance regarding study track application and selection will be provided in the CCLEB announcement via Marine Administrative Message (MARADMIN).

b. Experience Track Program Eligibility. To qualify for a FAO AMOS through the experience track, Active and Reserve component officers of all ranks must have:

(1) A regionally focused graduate-level degree focused on topics that could include, but are not limited to, the historical, political, cultural, military/security, sociological, scientific/technical, economic, and geographic factors of specific foreign countries and/or regions.

(2) Foreign language skills in one or more of the predominant languages used by the populations of the regions the Marine requests to specialize. Officers will validate foreign language proficiency by obtaining a minimum score of two in two of the three modalities (Listening/Reading/Speaking) on the DLPT/OPI. DLPT/OPI scores must be within one year of application, with exception granted to those who score 3/3/3 within two years of application.

(3) Professional experience of not less than one year (may be waived to six months) in the requested country or region of specialty, involving significant interaction with foreign populations.

### 3. Application/Selection

#### a. Study Track Application/Selection

(1) The CCLEB selects First Lieutenants and Captains for the FAO study track program. Selection via the CCLEB is based on the review of an applicant's Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) and their CCLEB Questionnaire, per Example 1.

(2) The CCLEB will consider individual performance, individual preference, previous language study, language aptitude, undergraduate major, available IRT locations, and the needs of the Marine Corps. CCLEB selection results will be announced via MARADMIN. Region and language assignments will be provided under separate cover.

(3) Officers considering application to the FAO study track program should discuss possible career impacts with career counselors at DC M&RA, Manpower Management Division Records and Performance (MMRP) and their PMOS monitor within DC M&RA. The IAP recommends that aviators not apply for the study track program before reaching their first flight gate. Combat arms or combat service support officers should consider delaying their application until completion of a current or approaching operating forces assignment.

(4) Officers interested in the FAO program are encouraged to send questions to the IAP Office at [IAPMarine@usmc.mil](mailto:IAPMarine@usmc.mil).

#### b. Experience Track Application/Selection

(1) The goal of the FAO experience track program is to identify and designate officers who already meet FAO education and training requirements as defined in references (d) and (j). Qualified Reserve officers are encouraged to apply for FAO designation through the experience track.

(a) Applicants who possess language skills, a qualifying graduate degree, and relevant regional and/or pol-mil expertise aligned to the region-specific MOS they are applying for should request FAO MOS designation via the experience track selection panel.

(b) Officers who lack a regionally focused graduate degree but possess significant regional expertise and qualifying language skills may apply for a CCW per the guidance provided in Chapter 2, paragraph 3.c.

(2) Active and Reserve component officers requesting designation as a FAO via the experience track may apply to the CMC, attention: DC PP&O/PLU at any time. Applications must be in Naval Letter format and include appropriate command endorsements. DC PP&O/PL will convene a selection panel on a quarterly basis to

consider experience track applications. Upon selection, officers will coordinate with their Personnel Administration Center (PAC) to add the appropriate AMOS to their records.

(3) Experience Track selection panel results will be announced via MARADMIN.

(4) See Appendix (A) for a sample experience track application.

#### 4. Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Training

##### a. Study Track Training

(1) Phase I Academic Training. Phase I consists of a 12 month regionally focused academic program at NPS in Monterey, CA, resulting in a Masters in Security Studies. Instead of a thesis, officers must pass the comprehensive exam at NPS and successfully complete basic language training at DLIFLC to receive their masters degree.

(2) Phase II Language Training. The goal of basic language training is for students to meet DLIFLC standards. If FAOs-in-training fail to achieve 2/2/1+ at graduation, The IAP Office will determine whether to convert the Marine to the RAO AMOS or authorize progression through IRT. If IRT is approved, FAOs must retest immediately following their return from IRT.

(3) Phase III In Region Training (IRT). Phase III training builds upon academic study and language training through a year of cultural and language immersion in the Marine's assigned region. Officers will develop pol-mil and security cooperation credibility and an understanding of complex regional and cultural issues. Marines will refine language skills through personal interaction with foreign populations, and enhance the regional education gained at NPS. Per reference (j), Marines with equivalent prior duty experience may apply to the Director, PL for a waiver of the IRT requirement. The Director, PL may waive the length of FAO IRT training to 6 months if deemed appropriate.

(a) Phase III training typically involves a one-year accompanied tour. Applicants should consider that living conditions at IRT locations may be considered substandard in comparison to U.S. standards of living and will vary by location. FAOs on IRT can expect living conditions to equal that of U.S. personnel assigned to the local U.S. Embassy.

(b) Phase III training may be unaccompanied in some locations due to security and operational requirements.

b. Performance Evaluation for Study Track Personnel. FAOs in a training status will receive fitness reports (FitReps) in accordance with reference (l). Specific Reporting Senior (RS) and Reviewing Officer (RO) requirements are as follows:

(1) NPS and DLIFLC: The Marine Office at NPS and DLIFLC will provide guidance on FitReps while assigned there.

(2) In Region Training (IRT). During Phase III training where FAOs are attached to a U.S. Embassy, the SDO/DATT or a service attaché senior in grade to the Marine, will serve as the FAO's Reporting Senior (RS). When there is a Marine Attaché (MARA) assigned to the Defense Attaché Office, the MARA will be assigned as the FAO's RS. If the FAO is assigned to a non-traditional IRT billet, such as regional MARFORs, the G-3/5 should be the FAO's RS. Branch Head, DC, PP&O/PLU will normally serve as the Reviewing Officer (RO) for all FAOs during Phase III Training.

(3) Automated Performance Evaluation System (APES) Accounts. Service members or civilians from other services serving as RSs must establish an APES account by contacting MM Record and Performance Branch (MMRP) by email at: HQMC.A-PES@usmc.mil.

5. Study Track Service Obligation. In accordance with reference (h), an officer incurs a minimum four-year service obligation upon completion of FAO study track training.

a. The service obligation begins on the date the officer officially completes training (i.e., date of PCS at the conclusion of Phase III for study track FAOs). FAOs will complete a three-year IAP utilization tour in a FAO coded billet, while fulfilling their service obligation. MMOA may defer a utilization tour up to three years to ensure PMOS credibility is sustained in an officer's career. FAOs must pursue completion of their utilization tour immediately following this PMOS tour.

b. Study track FAOs who return to the operating forces after IRT will be assigned to commands operationally oriented toward their region of expertise in accordance with reference (n). Such an assignment enables the officer to leverage their regional expertise while building PMOS credibility.

Example 1: Commandant's Professional Intermediate-Level Education  
Board (CPIB)/Commandant's Career-Level Education Board (CCLEB)  
Questionnaire

Refer to annual CPIB/CCLEB MARADMIN release to access the latest  
version of the CPIB/CCLEB questionnaire. Example given below.

Commandant's Professional Intermediate Board / Commandant's Career Level Education Board

Print in PDF

(Please be sure to save your application about every 10 minutes to avoid losing any changes.)

This questionnaire is intended for slating purposes only. Preferences stated here will not influence selection by the board prior to slating. The board will select the best and most fully qualified officers to participate in education programs based on military performance.

Rank each program in order of preference.  
Do not select an option more than once.

1. \*Program preference 1: International Affairs Officer Programs

2. \*Program preference 2: Fellowship

3. \*Program preference 3: Olmsted Scholar or Foreign PME

4. \*Program preference 4: Special Education Program/Advanced Degree Program

5. \*Program preference 5: Resident PME

Which programs on your preference list would cause you to resign or retire in lieu of orders?

6. Resign/retire? I would accept orders to any program

Where would you prefer to attend resident PME?

7. PME preference: USMC (EWS or C&S)

Which fellowship would you prefer to attend?

8. Fellowship preference: Congressional Fellowship Program

Notes:  
1. **Olmsted** is only for officers with less than **11 years** of active service. If Olmsted Scholar is your first choice you must contact the POCs in the MARADMIN to begin the application process.  
2. **Foreign PME** is only for **field grade** officers.  
3. Officers are **not eligible** to attend a program that they have **previously attended**. The only exception is Resident PME. Field grade officers can attend resident PME if they previously attended company grade resident PME.  
4. **WHINSEC, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, and Logistics Fellowship** are only for **field grade** officers. **WHINSEC** requires DLPT of 2+/2+ in **Spanish**. **Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy** requires DLPT of 2+/2+ in **any language**.

For the International Affairs Officer Programs (IAOP), rank your top three region/language preferences.  
Do not select an option more than once.

9. \*IAOP preference 1: LATIN AMERICA - SPANISH - PERU

10. \*IAOP preference 2: SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA - FRENCH - SENEGAL, MOROCCO, OR TUNISIA

11. \*IAOP preference 3: LATIN AMERICA - PORTUGUESE - BRAZIL

For the Special Education Program (SEP) and Advanced Degree Program (ADP), rank your top five discipline preferences.  
Do not select an option more than once.

12. \*SEPIADP preference 1: MATERIAL LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT - 8802

13. \*SEPIADP preference 2: INFORMATION WARFARE - 8834

14. \*SEPIADP preference 3: OPERATIONS ANALYSIS - 8850

15. \*SEPIADP preference 4: COMPUTER SCIENCE - 8848

16. \*SEPIADP preference 5: MODELING SIMULATION ANALYSIS - 8825

Notes:  
1. **Education** (8802) and **History** (8878) are only offered through the Advanced Degree Program at civilian institutions. This program is **not fully funded**. Tuition is the responsibility of the officer. If ADP is your first choice, contact the program POC and apply to civilian institutions. **Attach any acceptance letters** to this questionnaire.  
2. **Aeronautical Engineering** (8820) and **Environmental Engineering** (8831) are only offered through the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT). AFIT requires completion of the **Graduate Record Exam (GRE)** for acceptance. If you have taken the GRE, **attach the test results** to this questionnaire.  
3. **Public Affairs Management** (4305) is only available for officers with **PMOS of 4302**.

What is the highest degree you have earned?

17. Degree: Bachelor's degree

What is the area of study of your highest degree?  
(Limit: 40 characters)

18. \*Major: History

Have you taken the Graduate Record Examination (GRE)?  
If yes, upload exam results as attachment.

19. \*GRE? Yes No

For ADP and SEP Law/ADP, do you have a letter of acceptance from a university?  
If yes, upload acceptance letter as attachment.

20. \*Acceptance? Yes No

Do you have specific areas of expertise or education you feel will assist in the slating process?  
(Limit: 600 characters)

21. Comments:

Attachments (Add New)

DOCUMENT TYPE	DOCUMENT NAME	CREATE DATE
(* This question requires a mandatory response)		

Save Draft

Submit

Cancel

3-6

Enclosure (2)



## Chapter 4

### Regional Affairs Officer (RAO) Policies and Procedures

1. Purpose. To provide SMEs in international pol-mil affairs possessing advanced regional and cultural education to enhance critical warfighting capabilities. RAOs apply their expertise to strengthen international partnerships, sharpen operational plans, and enable joint, maritime, and expeditionary forces to navigate complex cultural and geopolitical landscapes.

#### 2. Eligibility

##### a. Study Track Program Eligibility

(1) Study track RAOs are selected through the CPIB in accordance with reference (h). The RAO study track program is limited to active-duty Majors and Majors (select), with nine to 15 years of commissioned service. The grade requirement is based on the current or selected grade of the officer at the time RAO training commences.

(2) Officers must meet minimum time-on-station requirements for their current assignment prior to commencement of the study track program. Waivers may be approved at the discretion of MMOA per references (h) and (n). Selection boards can recommend a deferral of training for up to one year to allow for operational commitments or unaccompanied tours. The CPIB MARADMIN announcement will provide more detail regarding waivers.

##### b. Experience Track Program Eligibility

(1) The RAO experience track program's goal is to identify and designate officers whose regionally focused knowledge and experience meet the requirements to be RAOs as outlined in paragraph 2 below.

(2) Active and Reserve component officers of all ranks are eligible for the RAO experience track if they have a regionally focused graduate-level degree with study focused on topics that include, but are not limited to, the historical, political, cultural, military, security, sociological, scientific, technical, economic, and geographic aspects of specific foreign countries and regions. Individuals with a graduate degree in a discipline other than regional studies or international relations, may qualify with 16 or more credit hours of regionally focused graduate study.

(3) Officers who lack a regionally focused graduate degree but possess significant regional expertise may apply for a CCW per the guidance provided in Chapter 2, paragraph 3.c.

### 3. Application/Selection

#### a. Study Track

(1) Selection via the CPIB is a two-step process based on review of an applicant's OMPF as well as their CPIB Questionnaire submission (see Example (1) in Chapter 1).

(2) The CPIB will consider individual performance, individual preference, undergraduate major, and the needs of the Marine Corps. CPIB selection results are announced via MARADMIN.

#### b. Experience Track

(1) Active and Reserve component officers requesting RAO AMOS designation may apply to CMC, attention: DC PP&O/PLU at any time. Applications must be in Naval Letter format and must be endorsed by the first O-6 in the Marine's chain of command. DC PP&O/PLU will convene a board on a quarterly basis to consider experience track applications. Upon selection, officers will coordinate with their PAC to add the appropriate AMOS to their records.

(2) Experience Track selection panel results will be announced via MARADMIN.

(3) See Appendix (c) for a sample Experience Track application format.

### 4. Regional Affairs Officer (RAO) Training

a. Study Track Training. The RAO study track consists of one phase: an 18-month program at NPS in Monterey, CA, resulting in a Master's Degree in Security Studies. Study track RAOs must complete a written thesis to be awarded a master's degree and the appropriate regional RAO AMOS.

b. Performance Evaluation During Study Track Training. RAOs in a training status will receive FitReps in accordance with reference (1). While assigned to NPS for academic study, the Marine Office will provide guidance regarding RS and RO assignments.

5. Study Track Service Obligation. Upon graduation, RAOs will immediately serve a utilization tour in a RAO-coded billet. In accordance with reference (h), officers incur a minimum four-year service obligation upon completion of their course of study at NPS. RAOs will complete a two-year IAP utilization tour while fulfilling their service obligation in accordance with references (h) and (n). Study track RAOs who return to the operating forces after their utilization tour will be assigned to commands operationally oriented toward their region of expertise. Such an assignment will enable

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officers to leverage their LREC skills while building PMOS credibility.

## Chapter 5

### Foreign Area Staff Noncommissioned Officer (FAS) Policies and Procedures

1. Purpose. To provide Marine SNCOs who serve as joint force strategic effects operators. FASs increase awareness and understanding of human, diplomatic, military, and environmental factors in foreign theaters, advance DoD access and influence in foreign countries and theaters; and build partner capability, capacity, interoperability, and the will to conduct operations aligned with U.S. interests.

#### 2. Eligibility

##### a. Study Track Program Eligibility

(1) The FAS Study Track program is limited to active-duty Staff Sergeants (Select) to Master Gunnery Sergeants who meet minimum time-on-station requirements. First Sergeants and Sergeants Major are not eligible for the study-track program.

(2) Marines must have a minimum of an associate degree, or at least 60 credits, from an accredited institution.

b. Experience-Track Program Eligibility. Any active or reserve enlisted Marine with a minimum rank of Staff Sergeant (Select) may apply for the FAS experience track. The FAS experience track identifies and selects Marines whose experience and knowledge meet the following criteria:

(1) Minimum of an associate degree, or 60 credits, from an accredited institution.

(2) Sufficient regional expertise.

(3) Foreign language skills in one or more predominant language of the requested region with a minimum DLPT score of 1+L/1+R/1+S.

(4) Marines who lack an associate degree or 60 credits from an accredited institution but demonstrate significant regional and/or pol-mil expertise may apply for a CCW per Chapter 1.

#### 3. Application/Selection

a. Study Track Program. The FAS Program selection panel meets to review and select applicants annually. The Director, PL will release a MARADMIN to announce when the panel will meet along with application instructions and deadlines. The panel will consist of representatives from PP&O/PLU and MMEA. Appendix (B) contains a sample application.

(1) SNCOs who possess a bachelor's degree and wish to pursue a graduate certificate at NPS must apply for and be admitted by NPS prior to the annual FAS selection board. SNCOs must submit official copies of required education transcripts to the NPS registrar for review and decision. Marines who do not gain admission to NPS should still apply to the FAS board to be considered for interagency pol-mil training.

(2) Marines who possess an associate degree or equivalent credits should apply to the FAS selection panel to be considered for interagency pol-mil training.

b. Experience Track Program

(1) Active and Reserve component Marines may apply to the Experience Track program at any time. Applications must be in letter format and endorsed by the first O-6 in the Marine's chain of command.

(2) Branch Head, DC PP&O/PLU will convene a quarterly panel to consider experience track applications.

(3) DC PP&O/PLU will publish FAS panel results via MARADMIN.

(4) Appendix (C) contains a sample application.

4. Foreign Area Staff Non-Commissioned Officer (FAS) Training

a. Study Track Training. The FAS study track is a 12-month training program that consists of three elements: education in international and pol-mil affairs, language training, and regional immersion. When available, additional training opportunities may extend the length of the training portion of the program.

(1) Academic Training

(a) If accepted by NPS, FAS candidates that possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution may qualify to complete six months of graduate-level, regionally focused study resulting in a graduate certificate.

(b) All other FAS candidates with a minimum of an associate degree, or approximately 60 credits, will complete interagency pol-mil training at one or more DoD and interagency institutions (i.e., Foreign Service Institute, DoD Centers of Strategic Studies, etc.)

(2) Language Training

(a) Study track FAS Marines who lack a 1+L/1+R/1+S DLPT score in their assigned language will complete language training either in the Continental U.S. (CONUS) or in their assigned region

during cultural immersion. This is dependent upon the Marine's region of focus, existing language abilities, and language training availability.

(b) During language training, FAS Marines will gain functional proficiency in a foreign language as demonstrated by a DLPT/OPI score of 1+/1+/1+ (Listening/Reading/Speaking). FAS Marines will take the DLPT/OPI within 30 days of return to CONUS or completion of language training if completed in CONUS.

(3) In Region Training (IRT). The IRT portion of FAS training may include a six-month immersive experience with concurrent language study in the Marine's region of focus and/or other opportunities that build regional and pol-mil expertise. FASs will enhance their pol-mil understanding and experience through immersion in their assigned region. Marines will visit U.S. Embassies to learn about U.S. Embassy Country Team operations.

(4) Responsibilities and Chain of Command While in Training. FAS Marines will receive fitness reports in accordance with reference (1).

(a) Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) and Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC). The Marine Office at NPS and DLIFLC will provide guidance on fitness reports for FAS students.

(b) Language Training and In Region Training (IRT). Commander, Bravo Company, Headquarters and Service Battalion, Headquarters Marine Corps will serve as the RS and the IAP Program Manager will serve as the RO for all FAS Marines while assigned to Washington, D.C. based language training and IRT.

## 5. Study Track Service Obligation

a. A SNCO incurs a minimum 2-year service obligation upon completion of FAS study track training. The service obligation begins on the date the Marine officially completes training (i.e., date of PCS at the conclusion of Phase III for study track FAS).

b. FAS training completion time depends on several factors. Study track training may take up to 12 months. Therefore, FASs may fulfill their utilization tour requirement prior to returning to a PMOS assignment in accordance with reference (n). Marines considering application to the FAS program should discuss possible career impacts with career counselors (DC M&RA/MMEA) and their PMOS monitor.

c. PLU will coordinate with MMEA to fill FAS assignments. Marines should communicate billet preferences to the FAS Program Manager.

APPENDIX A

Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AMOS	Additional Military Occupational Specialty
AOR	Area of Responsibility
APES	Automated Performance Evaluation System
BIC	Billet Identification Code
CCLEB	Commandant's Career-Level Education Board
CCW	Constructive Credit Waivers
CG, MARFORRES	Commander, Marine Forces Reserve
CG, TECOM	Commanding General, Training and Education Command
CMC	Commandant of the Marine Corps
CO	Commanding Officer
CONUS	Continental United States
CPIB	Commandant's Professional Intermediate-Level Education Board
DC A	Deputy Commandant for Aviation
DC CD&I	Deputy Commandant for Combat Development and Integration
DC I	Deputy Commandant for Information
DC M&RA	Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs
DC PP&O/PLU	Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies and Operations, International Affairs Branch
DC I&L(LF)	Deputy Commandant for Installations and Logistics
DC PP&O	Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies and Operations
Dir, PL	Director, Strategy and Plans
DLAB	Defense Language Aptitude Battery
DLI	Defense Language Institute
DLIFLC	Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center
DLPT	Defensive Language Proficiency Test
DMO	Distributed Maritime Operations
DoD	Department of Defense
DON/AA	Department of the Navy/Assistant for Administration
DON	Department of the Navy
DOR	Date of Rank
DOS	Department of State
DRMD	Directives and Records Management Division
DSCU	Defense Security Cooperation University
EABO	Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations
FACT	Foreign Affairs Counter Threat
FAO	Foreign Area Officer
FAS	Foreign Area Staff Non-Commissioned Officer
FitReps	Fitness Reports

FMOS	Free Military Occupational Specialty
FPME	Foreign Professional Military Education
HQMC	Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps
IAP	International Affairs Program
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
ILR	Interagency Language Roundtable
IRT	In-Region Training
LREC	Language Skills, Regional Expertise, and Cultural Knowledge
MAGTF	Marine Air-Ground Task Force
MARA	Marine Attaché
MARADMIN	Marine Administrative Message
MARDET	Marine Detachment
MARFOR	Marine Forces
MARSOC	Marine Forces Special Operations Command
MM	Manpower Management Division
MMEA	Manpower Management Division Enlisted Assignments
MMOA	Manpower Management Division Officer Assignment
MMRP	Manpower Management Division Records and Performance
MOS	Military Occupational Specialty
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
NPS	Naval Postgraduate School
NSDD-38	National Security Decision Directive 38
OMPF	Official Military Personnel File
OPI	Oral Proficiency Interview
PAC	Personnel Administration Center
PCS	Permanent Change of Station
PEB	Program Evaluation Board
PEP	Personnel Exchange Program
PII	Personally Identifiable Information
PL	Strategy and Plan Division
PLU	International Affairs Branch
PLU-8	International Affairs Program Branch
PME	Professional Military Education
PMOS	Primary Military Occupational Specialty
pol-mil	Political-Military
POM	Program Objective Memorandum
PWG	Program Objective Memorandum Working Group
RAO	Regional Affairs Officer
RO	Reviewing Officer
RS	Reporting Senior
SC	Security Cooperation



SCWDP	Security Cooperation Workforce Development Program
SDO/DATT	Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché
SE	Supporting Effort
SECNAV	Secretary of the Navy
SIF	Stand In Forces
SME	Subject Matter Expert
SNCO	Staff Non-Commissioned Officers
SSO	Special Security Office
T/O	Tables of Organization
TAD	Temporary Additional Duty
TFSP	Total Force Structure Process
TS/SCI	Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmented Information
T5	Tier 5

## APPENDIX B

### Glossary of Terms and Definitions

Experience Track. An IAP MOS pathway for Marine officer and enlisted personnel who already possess the qualifications for the FAO, RAO, or FAS MOS.

Foreign Area Officer (FAO). A commissioned officer from any of the six Military Services (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force, and Coast Guard) who serves as a joint force strategic effects operator increasing awareness and understanding of human, diplomatic, military, and environmental factors in foreign theaters; advances DoD access, influence, and posture in foreign countries and theaters; and builds partner capability, capacity, interoperability, and the will to conduct operations aligned with United States interests. Foreign language proficiency is required in at least one of the dominant languages in their specified region.

Foreign Area Staff Non-Commissioned Officer (FAS). A Marine Staff NCO who serves as a joint force strategic effects operator increasing awareness and understanding of human, diplomatic, military, and environmental factors in foreign theaters, advances DoD access, influence and, posture in foreign countries and theaters; and builds partner capability, capacity, interoperability, and the will to conduct operations aligned with United States interests. Foreign language proficiency is required in at least one of the dominant languages in their specified region.

Foreign Professional Military Education (FPME). A program enabling Marine Officers selected by the Top-Level School Board or Commandant's Professional Intermediate-Level Education Board to attend one of several foreign military educational institutions to learn of the peoples, customs, cultures, and a variety of perspectives on strategic and international issues.

International Affairs Program (IAP). The Marine Corps program that coordinates the selection, training and assignment of Marines who participate in the FAO, RAO, Foreign Affairs SNCO, and MPEP.

In Region Training (IRT). Training that involves significant interaction with host nation nationals and host nation entities in the regions in which the FAO or FAS specializes.

Personnel Exchange Program (PEP). A Marine Corps program facilitating the exchange of Marine officer and enlisted personnel with those of a foreign military through international agreements to strengthen international partnerships.

Political-Military (pol-mil) Expertise. Knowledge of U.S. Government policies, procedures and coordination with foreign governments and

military forces related to security assistance, international negotiations, and agreements.

Regional Affairs Officer (RAO). A commissioned Marine officer who serves as a joint force strategic effects operator increasing awareness and understanding of human, diplomatic, military, and environmental factors in foreign theaters; advances DoD access, influence, and posture in foreign countries and theaters; and builds partner capability, capacity, interoperability, and the will to conduct operations aligned with United States interests.

Regional Expertise. Knowledge about a specific region of the world that focuses on but is not limited to the political, historical, cultural, sociological, economic, and geographic factors of that region.

Security Cooperation (SC). All DoD interactions with foreign security establishments to build security relationships that promote specific U.S. security interests, develop allied and partner nation military and security capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations, and provide U.S. forces with peacetime and contingency access to allied and partner nations.

Study Track. An IAP MOS pathway which enables Marine officer and enlisted personnel to qualify for a FAO, RAO, or FAS MOS by completing an academic and skills training program designed to build the language, regional expertise and pol-mil competencies required for each MOS.

APPENDIX C

Foreign Area Officer (FAO)/Regional Affairs Officer  
(RAO) Experience Track Application Format  
(Utilize Unit Letterhead)

From: Rank First M. Last EDIPI: 1234567890 PMOS USMC(R)  
To: Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies and Operations (DC PP&O)  
Via: Chain of Command (at least through Division or Group-level)

Subj: REQUEST FOR FOREIGN AREA OFFICER (FOA)/REGIONAL AFFAIRS OFFICER  
(RAO)ADDITIONAL MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY (MOS)

Ref: (a) MCO 1540.33

Encl: (1) Personal Essay (3,000 words demonstrating the applicant's  
writing and knowledge of the requested region(s).  
Previously completed academic papers or publications  
that meet these requirements may be submitted)  
(2) Copy of all undergraduate/graduate transcripts

1. Per the reference, it is requested that I be awarded (the FAO  
Additional MOS of 824X or the RAO Additional MOS of 822X).

2. The following information is submitted to support my request:

a. DLAB score: Date, Place Tested (if taken)

b. DLPT information: (Required for FAO, as available for RAO)

(1) Language(s)/Dialect(s):

(2) Date, Place Tested:

(3) DLPT Type(s):

c. Summary of military education:

d. Summary of civilian education:

e. Summary of FAO/RAO oriented experience: (Be thorough. List  
all civilian and/or military experience in the requested region).

f. I possess a (Secret/Top Secret) security clearance based on a  
(Type of Investigation) completed on (date) by (Investigating  
Organization).

3. Contact information: (Work phone and e-mail address)

MCO 1540.33  
11 Mar 2025

F. M. LAST

APPENDIX D

Foreign Area Staff Non-Commissioned Officer (FAS) Study Track  
Application Format  
(Utilize Unit Letterhead)

From: Rank First M. Last EDIPI: 1234567890 PMOS USMC  
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Attn: PP&O/PLU-8)  
Via: Chain of Command (at least through Division or Group-level/O-6  
Command level)

Subj: FYXX FOREIGN AREA STAFF NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER (FAS) PROGRAM  
(STUDY TRACK) APPLICATION

Ref: (a) MCO 1540.33  
(b) MARADMIN XXX/XX

Encl: (1) Personal Statement (Mandatory for all applicants:  
Complete personal statement in Naval letter format to  
explain your interest in the FAS Program and how your  
experience and background can best serve the Marine Corps  
in the FAS Program. Personal statements should be at  
least 600 but no more than 800 words)  
(2) Copy of all undergraduate and graduate transcripts  
(3) Copies of adverse material and disciplinary records (if  
applicable)  
(4) Any additional information to substantiate application

1. Per the references, I request to be considered for the FYXX FAS  
study track.

2. I request to study: [list up to 3 languages in order of  
preference or "any language"]; and/or [list up to 3 regional studies  
curricula in order of preference or "any region"]. I [do/do not] wish  
to be considered for other languages or areas of study if my  
preferences are not available. (\*Refer to MCO 1540.33 regional  
designations)

3. The following information is submitted to support my request:

a. DLAB score: Date, Place Tested (if taken). Required for all  
FAS applicants without a current DLPT score of at least L1+/R1+.

b. DLPT information: (if taken)

(1) Language(s)/Dialect(s):

(2) Date, Place Tested

(3) DLPT Type(s):

(4) DLPT Score(s):

(5) OPI Score(s):

c. Date of Rank (DOR):

d. Overseas Control Date:

e. Date Current Tour Began:

f. It is certified that I and all my dependents are medically qualified, per the reference.

g. Date/Results of Overseas Screening:

h. Date/Results of Independent Duty Screening:

i. Summary of military education:

j. Summary of civilian education: (Specifically note all language, foreign area, and international relations studies)

k. Summary of FAS-oriented experience: (Be thorough. List military duties involving interaction with foreign militaries or government representatives. Additionally, list all immersion and/or military experience in the region of the requested AMOS.)

l. I possess a (Secret/Top Secret) security clearance based on a (Type of Investigation) completed on (date) by (Investigating Organization).

4. If selected, I agree to remain on active duty for at least two years after completion of training for the FAS program in addition to any obligation previously incurred. I further understand I am required to ensure extension requests or re-enlistment required to meet this service obligation must be approved prior to executing orders for the FAS program.

5. Contact information: (Work phone and e-mail address)

F. M. LAST

APPENDIX E

Foreign Area Staff Non-Commissioned Officer (FAS) Experience Track  
Application Format  
(Utilize Unit Letterhead)

From: Rank First M. Last EDIPI: 1234567890 PMOS USMC(R)  
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Attn: PP&O/PLU-8)  
Via: Chain of Command (at least through Division or Group-level/O-6  
Command level)

Subj: REQUEST FOR FOREIGN AREA STAFF NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER (FAS)  
ADDITIONAL MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY (AMOS)

Ref: (a) MCO 1540.33

Encl: (1) Professional Essay (Mandatory for all applicants: Essay of  
approximately five pages demonstrating adequate.  
professional knowledge of the region that addresses a  
current regional issue and how it affects U.S.  
Foreign Policy or regional policies)  
(2) Copy of all undergraduate and graduate transcripts  
(3) Any additional information to substantiate regional  
experience

1. Per the reference, it is requested that I be awarded the FAS  
Additional MOS of 823X.

2. The following information is submitted to support my request:

a. DLAB score: Date, Place Tested (if taken).

b. DLPT information: (Required for FAS')

(1) Language(s)/dialect(s):

(2) Date, Place Tested:

(3) DLPT Type(s):

(4) DLPT Score(s):

(5) OPI Score(s):

c. DOR:

d. Overseas Control Date:

e. Date Current Tour Began:

f. Summary of military education:



g. Summary of civilian education: (Specifically note all language, foreign area, and international relations studies.)

h. Summary of FAS-oriented experience: (Be thorough. List military duties involving interaction with foreign militaries or government representatives. Additionally, list all immersion and/or military experience in the region of the requested AMOS.)

i. I possess a (Secret/Top Secret) security clearance based on a (Type of Investigation) completed on (date) by (Investigating Organization).

3. If selected to receive a FAS AMOS, I understand that I am highlighting my availability to serve in international affairs and political-military billets when not serving in my PMOS. I further understand that subsequent declination on my part to serve in such billets may result in my FAS AMOS being administratively withdrawn.

4. Contact information: (Work phone and e-mail address)

F. M. LAST