

THIRD QUARTER 2024

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS PROGRAM NEWSLETTER



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LtCol Christopher Dellow with military, civilian, and contractor personnel from the International Affairs Program Office ("El Ocho") on the day of his retirement at the National Museum of the Marine Corps. LtCol Dellow retired from the Marine Corps after faithfully serving for 25 years. (Courtesy photo by Ronal Morales)

Message from the Program Office

By: MSgt Jorge Riveromontes

As we bid farewell to LtCol Dellow upon his retirement, we take a moment to reflect on his remarkable career and the profound impact he has made in service to our Nation and to the Foreign Area Program. A native of Memphis, TN, and raised in Binghamton, NY, LtCol Dellow began his career at SUNY Maritime College, where he graduated in May 2000.

After graduating, LtCol Dellow reported to Quantico, VA, to undergo training at The Basic School and the Infantry Officer's Course. His commitment to excellence was evident from the start, and in 2001, he joined the 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, as a Rifle Platoon Commander, subsequently deploying with the 22d Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). In 2002, LtCol Dellow took on a new challenge by transferring to the Small Craft Company, where he deployed to Al Anbar Province, Iraq. His leadership and tactical wisdom were critical in this demanding environment, exemplifying the Marine Corps' core values.

In 2004, LtCol Dellow was transferred to the Joint Interagency Task Force South 2004, serving as the Aide to the Director. This

Disclaimer: The articles published in this newsletter are for information purposes only. Featured articles and "IAP Marines In Action" announcements are for information only. Views and opinions expressed are those of the authors alone and do not represent official Marine Corps policy or endorsement by the HQMC IAP Office. role underscored his versatility and ability to operate effectively within interagency, a skill that defined much of his subsequent career. In 2007, he reported to Ft. Benning, GA, for the Maneuver Captain's Career Course and Airborne School. Upon graduating, he joined the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment as a Rifle Company Commander, deploying to Karmah, Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. His leadership in combat zones was exemplary, guiding his troops through complex and challenging missions.

Furthering his education, LtCol Dellow graduated from the Naval Postgraduate School and the Defense Language Institute in 2010, beginning In Region Training in Rabat, Morocco. This career phase strengthened his expertise in international affairs and his ability to foster strong military relationships across borders. In 2013, LtCol Dellow began his tour as the Assistant Operations Officer for the 22d MEU, deploying in both the 5th and 6th Fleet Areas of Responsibility. LtCol Dellow's commitment to education and training led him to the Education Command in 2014, where he served with the Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning as the Staff Secretary.

In 2017, he embarked on an international assignment to Bahia Blanca, Argentina, serving as the Marine Corps Exchange Officer to the Argentine Marine Corps. This role enhanced bilateral military relations and his Argentine-accented Spanish and underscored his deep understanding of global military dynamics.

In July 2019, LtCol Dellow took on his final assignment as the International Affairs Program Manager in the Plans, Policies, and Operations Department. His strategic vision and leadership in this role were pivotal, shaping international cooperation and policy for the Marine Corps. Notably, he led the single-track initiative for Marine FAOs, a testament to his influence and dedication.

Throughout his career, LtCol Dellow's family has been a source of unwavering support. His two sons, Gavin (12) and Mason (10), have stood by him, providing strength and encouragement. The Dellow family, who resides in Burke, VA, has been a constant presence, accompanying him on his journey through numerous assignments.

As LtCol Dellow retires, we honor his unwavering dedication and his countless contributions to the International Affairs Program. His legacy will undoubtedly inspire future generations of Marines, and we wish him and his family all the best in their future endeavors.



LtCol Dellow on the day of his retirement ceremony with his retiring officer, BGen Doran, his sons Gavin and Mason, and Mr. Fisher. (Courtesy photos by Ronal Morales)

U.S. Marines, Spouses Attend Joint Foreign Area Officer Course

By: U.S. Marine Corps Capt. Alejandro A. Arteaga, Northeast Asia FAO In-Training



U.S. Marines assigned as regional security studies master's students at Naval Postgraduate School, their spouses, and Marines and civilian contractors from the International Affairs Program Office, Plans, Policies, and Operations, Headquarters Marine Corps, pose for a photo during the Joint Foreign Area Officer Course (JFAOC), Phase I, at U.S. Army Garrison Presidio of Monterey, California, June 27, 2024. The five-day JFAOC, Phase I, provides newly assigned foreign area officers (FAO), regional affairs officers (RAO), foreign area staff noncommissioned officers (FAS) from all service branches, and their spouses, with an orientation to the FAO career field. The JFAOC, Phase I, includes briefings from senior FAOs and other experts on a wide array of FAO-focused topics. (Courtesy photo by Ronal Morales)

MONTEREY, Calif. - U.S. Marines attended the Joint Foreign Area Officer Course (JFAOC), Phase I, at the Naval Postgraduate School and U.S. Army Garrison Presidio of Monterey, California, June 24–28, 2024.

Selected Marines from across the Fleet, along with their spouses, took part in the five-day course that provides newly assigned foreign area officers (FAO), regional affairs officers, and foreign area staff noncommissioned officers from all military branches with an orientation to the FAO career field.

Attendees for this iteration received guidance from U.S. Army Gen. Christopher G. Cavoli, Commander, U.S. European Command and Supreme Allied Commander Europe. Cavoli, a foreign area officer with a concentration in Eurasia, is the most senior FAO in the U.S. Military.

"Being a good FAO starts with being a good American, but you must also know your job, your individual branch of service, and the other services in the joint force, be smart and adaptable, know the host nation partner government, military, language, culture, and society, stay physically fit, be confident, and communicate, speak, and write clearly," said Cavoli. "There is no 'howto' guide to being FAO but knowing how to bring value to the U.S. Military, the Embassy Country Team, and the host nation partners is a good start."

U.S. Marines, Spouses Attend Joint Foreign Area Officer Course, Continued

The course includes briefings from senior FAOs and other experts on many career-relevant topics including what to expect in different positions around the world and how to best integrate with the host country you are living in.

Marines and their spouses met counterparts from other branches, building invaluable relationships and enhancing their professional networks for future collaboration. The FAO community is inherently joint in nature, and the relationships built during JFAOC, Phase I, are undoubtedly beneficial as they serve in their roles to further the U.S. Government's security objectives.

"My wife, Natalye, and I attended the JFAOC in preparation for our future assignment to Rio de Janeiro as a FAO," said U.S. Marine Corps Capt. Tomas Aguilar, a ground supply officer and regional security studies master's student. "My wife is completely new to military life and was feeling uneasy about future overseas assignments and being away from her family, but after the presentations and meeting so many other spouses going through the same experience, she is now very excited and enthusiastic about our future assignments overseas."

The Marines in JFAOC, comprised of field grade officers, company grade officers, and staff noncommissioned officers, were competitively selected from various occupational specialties to serve as international representatives assigned to critical positions at geographic combatant commands and U.S. Embassies around the world.

The next JFAOC course is scheduled for January 2025. For more information about the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, please visit <u>https://www.dliflc.edu/</u>

For more information on becoming a Marine FAO, RAO, or FAS, please visit <u>https://www.ppo.marines.mil/Units/Strategy-and-</u> <u>Plans-Division/International-Affairs-Branch/International-Affairs-Program/</u>

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IAP Marines in Action

Strengthening Bonds: Reflections from a Civil Affairs Team Leader on Balikatan-24

By: Major Ismael R. Lopez, Latin America Foreign Area Officer, Detachment 3 Commander, 1st Civil Affairs Group, Force Headquarters Group, Marine Forces Reserve



Major Lopez during CAT 5 (1st and 3rd CAG) Gift Exchange with 7ID AFP Civil Affairs at Caya Hall. Dingalan, Philippines.

As a Civil Affairs Team Leader with 1st Civil Affairs Group, the highlight of Balikatan-24 was witnessing the enduring friendships and professional bonds forged between our forces. One particularly memorable event was hosting a community relations event at the Aplaya Barangay Community Center, made possible by donations from the Joint Force of the CJCMOTF. We provided P9,563.50 PHP (approximately USD 174) worth of essential items, including 50 kg of rice, non-perishable packaged foods, a dual-butane burner, and an electric fan. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) led the initiative, and our Civil Affairs Team donated these items to the Barangay Council at the Aplaya Community Center. The event was attended by over 45 people, including community leaders and the Barangay Captain, who expressed heartfelt thanks to the AFP and Marines for their continued support. They extended a warm welcome back for Balikatan-25, underscoring the deep mutual respect and cooperation we have cultivated. These relationships are the bedrock of our cooperation, built over decades of shared experiences and mutual respect.

My experience and training as a Latin America Foreign Area Officer greatly enhanced my Civil Affairs Officer role. This background adds significant value to the conduct of Civil-Military Operations, supporting I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF), Marine Forces Pacific (MARFORPAC), and U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) objectives. By leveraging cultural knowledge, language skills, and regional expertise, we improve our ability to navigate complex geopolitical landscapes, fostering better cooperation and understanding. These capabilities are crucial for advancing the National Defense Strategy (NDS) in the Indo-Pacific area of responsibility (AOR), ensuring a coordinated approach to maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

IAP Marines in Action Strengthening Bonds: Reflections from a Civil Affairs Team Leader on Balikatan-24, Continued



Major Lopez and CAT 5 with AFP CA counterparts after hosting a successful COMREL event. Standing shoulder-to-shoulder.

A cornerstone of Balikatan-24 was the humanitarian civic assistance (HCA) mission conducted by the Combined Joint Civil-Military Operations Task Force (CJCMOTF) from March 26 to May 9, 2024. Philippine and U.S. service members collaborated civil-military on engagements, engineering civic action projects, and community health engagements, benefiting over 23,000 Filipinos across five provinces. These efforts extended beyond immediate assistance. fostering enduring relationships and showcasing our dedication to the well-being of local communities.

In the context of Balikatan-24, the Civil Affairs component was essential for several reasons:

1. Community Engagement: A cornerstone of Balikatan-24 was the humanitarian civic assistance (HCA) mission conducted by the Combined Joint Civil-Military Operations Task Force (CJCMOTF) from March 26 to May 9, 2024. Philippine and U.S. service members collaborated on civil-military engagements, engineering civic action projects, and community health engagements, benefiting over 23,000 Filipinos across five provinces. The Civil Affairs Team I led, contributed three successful weeks of joint AFP/USMC operations, embodying the "shoulder-to-shoulder" partnership between the Philippines and the U.S. The team's Measures of Performance included 23 civil engagements, eight infrastructure assessments, 11 civil reconnaissance missions, and 91 hours of engagements. Additionally, they submitted two OHDACA project nomination proposals, potentially impacting an estimated 12,000 local populations. These efforts provided immediate assistance and fostered enduring relationships, highlighting our commitment to the well-being of local communities.

2. Cultural Sensitivity and Awareness: Civil Affairs personnel are trained to understand and respect the cultural nuances of the regions in which we operate. This cultural intelligence is essential in ensuring that our interactions are respectful and effective, avoiding misunderstandings that could hinder cooperation.

3. Strengthening Alliances: Civil Affairs teams' work plays a crucial role in supporting the broader strategic objectives of exercises like Balikatan. By leveraging our skills in cultural knowledge, language proficiency, and regional expertise—honed during my FAO tour in Colombia from 2019-2021—we enhance the perception of our forces as reliable partners and allies. This not only solidifies alliances but also fosters long-term stability in the region.

IAP Marines in Action Strengthening Bonds: Reflections from a Civil Affairs Team Leader on Balikatan-24, Continued



Major Lopez is speaking to the Dingalan Barangay at a COMREL event in Dingalan, Major Lopez presenting the Mayor's Office in Dingalan, a certificate of appreciation Aurora.

The similarities between the roles of a Foreign Area Officer (FAO) and a Civil Affairs Officer (CAO) are profound. Both positions require a deep understanding of regional dynamics, navigating complex cultural landscapes, and strong communication skills. My experience as an FAO, where I engaged with local leaders, built networks, and developed strategies for diplomatic and military cooperation, has been invaluable in my current role. In Civil Affairs, these skills translate directly into efforts to build and sustain partnerships, support humanitarian initiatives, and ensure that our military actions are aligned with local needs and priorities.

For FAOs considering a transition into civil affairs, the opportunities to leverage your expertise are abundant. The ability to engage with diverse communities, understand and respect cultural differences, and facilitate collaboration between military and civilian entities are all critical components of Civil Affairs work. By fostering trust and understanding, we contribute to a free and open Indo-Pacific region, aligning with the National Defense Strategy's objectives and enhancing our collective security and prosperity.

Civil Affairs teams played a pivotal role in the overall success of Balikatan-24 by enabling the Civilian-Military engagement component of the exercise. Our work is crucial in building bridges between military forces and civilian populations, ensuring that military operations are conducted with an awareness of and sensitivity to the local social, cultural, and political landscape. By facilitating communication and cooperation between military units and civilian entities, Civil Affairs specialists help to mitigate conflicts, provide essential services, and foster goodwill.

While the numbers—16,000 U.S and Joint participants, coupled with millions in aid—are impressive, Balikatan-24's true success lies in the strengthened interoperability, trust, and shared commitment among all participants. This exercise is not just a demonstration of military capability but a testament to our collective resolve to uphold the values of freedom and democracy.

IAP Marines in Action Strengthening Bonds: Reflections from a Civil Affairs Team Leader on Balikatan-24, Continued

Servicemembers from 14 countries participated in the International Observer Program, adding a unique dimension to the exercise and enhancing our understanding of diverse operational strategies and cultures. This program promotes transparency and mutual learning, highlighting the global significance of our collective security efforts. The scenarios we navigated were designed to prepare us for potential contingencies, ensuring our forces can operate seamlessly together in times of crisis. By fostering multinational cooperation, the program supports regional stability and builds trust among partner nations, contributing to a stronger and more coordinated defense posture.

As we look toward future iterations of Balikatan, we must continue emphasizing operational excellence and humanitarian outreach. By doing so, we prepare for potential challenges and build a foundation of goodwill and cooperation that will benefit all nations involved. Balikatan-24 has been a shining example of what we can achieve together, and I am honored to have been a part of it. Here's to a continued partnership and many more successful exercises in the future.



CAT 5 with AFP prior to an engagement at the Mayor's Office in Dingalan.



CAT 5 with AFP CA, Dingalan Barrangay with donated goods.

Interested in submitting and article for the IAP Newsletter? Contact us! International Affairs Program Office E-Mail: IAPMarine@usmc.mil



SECNAV FAO Summit





The SECNAV FAO Summit will be held at Mahan Hall

Parking will be available at the parking garage for POV's (no cost)

Meeting link <u>meet.google.com/nkj-aiya-jmn</u> Join by phone (US) <u>+1 304-512-0046</u> PIN: 837654892

Professional Development Opportunities



George Washington University conducts the JFAO Sustainment Courses in coordination with Defense Language National Security Education Office requirements for FAO sustainment training. Registration opens 30 days before the course start date: Please send your BIO along with the registration form to the <u>IAPMarine@usmc.mil</u> at least 3 weeks prior to course start dates. Registrations form can be found <u>HERE</u>:

> 2025 Tentative Course Schedule U.S. Africa Command Sustainment Course Dates/Location: May 21-25, 2024/Virtual U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Sustainment Course Dates/Location: December 9-12, 2024/Virtual U.S. Central Command Sustainment Course Dates/Location: March 3-6, 2025/Tampa, FL U.S. European Command Sustainment Course Dates/Location: April 7-10, 2025/Stuttgart, Germany U.S. Southern Command Sustainment Course Dates/Location: May 19-23, 2025/Washington, DC

Selection Boards

FISCAL YEAR 2026 ACTIVE AND RESERVE MARINE ATTACHÉ SELECTION BOARD

Board complete, awaiting results. <u>MARADMIN 171/24 HERE</u>.

FISCAL YEAR 2026 GROUND AND INTELLIGENCE PERSONNEL EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Board complete, awaiting results. MARADMIN 179/24 HERE.

FISCAL YEAR 2025 AND 2026 SECURITY COOPERATION OFFICER SELECTION BOARD

Board complete, awaiting results. MARADMIN 202/24 HERE.

FISCAL YEAR 2025 AVIATION TRANSITION CONVERSION, FIELD ACCESSION, PERSONNEL EXCHANGE PROGRAM AND INTERSERVICE EXCHANGE PROGRAM BOARD RESULTS

See results at MARADMIN 248/24 HERE.

Language Sustainment Resources

DLNSEO - Language Training Centers

The Language Training Center (LTC) Program provides language and culture training for Department of Defense (DoD) personnel. LTCs leverage existing university and college language and culture programs to meet the needs of DoD organizations and units. The Institute of International Education administers the Language Training Centers program on behalf of the Defense Language and National Security Education Office. Additional information can be found <u>HERE</u>.

DLIFLC - Foreign Area Officer Language Program



Special Operations Forces Teletraining System

<u>SOFTS Online - Register</u> <u>SOFTS Online - FAQ</u>



Joint Knowledge Online

FAO Language Sustainment Packs: Arabic, Chinese, French, Hindi, Indonesian, Korean, Persian Farsi, Portuguese, Spanish, Russian <u>JKO LCMS (jten.mil)</u>



Program Updates

- LREC Sustainment Program (LSP): FY24 LSP is closed. We will notify you when FY25 LSP is opened once we determine availability of FY25 funds. FAOs and FASs are encouraged to submit your requests for processing and approval. Please review the LSP Request Procedures on the IAP website prior to submitting your request. You must have a FAO or FAS AMOS and a current DLPT to request funds for language sustainment. Priority goes to your principal assigned language. You must show a proficiency (3/3) in your principal language or an immediate validated requirement if you wish to be considered for an additional same-region 2nd or 3rd language. Additionally, priority for funding will go to FAOs below 2/2 and FASs below 1/1 preparing for FAO/FAS assignment and DLPT. All TAD LSP requests must be command-endorsed. LSP requests requirements, instructions, and templates can be found HERE.
- **FAO/RAO/FAS/PEP's In-Action Photos and Articles:** IAP & DLNSEO are looking for high-definition photos capturing FAO/RAO/FAS/PEPs in action and articles highlighting your contributions to the service and the joint force to be displayed at the Pentagon's FAO wall. Please send your articles and photos with a brief caption to IAPMarine@usmc.mil.
- **IAP Outreach:** Reaching the entire IAP Community using NIPR emails is challenging. We asked that you increase your visits to our Marines.mil website. We will continue to post community updates and future newsletters on the IAP website.
- **FY25 FAO/RAO Slate:** The IAP office in coordination with MMOA will start the FY25 FAO/RAO utilization slate in the coming months. Available FY25 FAO/RAO billets will be announced on the IAP website.
- **FY26 MPEP Billet Vacancies:** For MPEP billet vacancies, visit the IAP website.
- **FY26 SCO Billet Vacancies:** For SCO billets vacancies, visit the IAP website.

<u>Featured Books, Articles, and Podcasts</u> <u>By IAP Marines</u>

- LtCol Michael E. Clark, "<u>A More Comprehensive Plan to</u> <u>Push Back Against China's Fishing Practices</u>," War on the Rocks, April 25, 2024.
- Maj Robert Holmes, "<u>The Numbered Fleet: The New Main</u> <u>Supported Force</u>," Center for International Maritime Security, June 25, 2024.
- MSgt Jorge Rivero, "<u>Decoy Warfare: Lessons and</u> <u>Implication from the War in Ukraine</u>." US Naval Institute, Proceedings, April 2024, Vol. 150/4/1,454.
- LtCol Evan Z. Ota, Contributor to <u>"Forging the Force: A</u> Joint Task Force in the Indo-Pacific," War on the Rocks, April 26, 2024.
- LtCol Gary J. Sampson, "<u>Pursuing Geopolitical Advantage?</u> <u>China's Search for Military Allies</u>," National Intelligence University, November 14, 2023.
- MSgt Jorge Rivero, "<u>Unleashing Fire and Fury: The TOS-</u> <u>1A's Impact in the Russo-Ukrainian War</u>," US Army Infantry Magazine, Winter 2023-2024, p. 30.

Other Related Reading Material

- Secretary of the Navy Del Toro releases "One Navy-Marine Corps Team: Advancing Department of the Navy Priorities." Download copy <u>**HERE**</u>.
- Defense Security Cooperation Agency released the 2023 Security Cooperation Conference Report. Download copy <u>HERE</u>.

If you publish an article or participate in a podcast discussion, contact us to include your material in the next IAP Newsletter. International Affairs Program E-Mail: IAPMarine@usmc.mil



If you have questions about future selection panels and IAP opportunities, contact us! International Affairs Program E-Mail: IAPMarine@usmc.mil