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To: International Affairs Program Coordinator (PLU-8)

Subj: AFTER ACTION REPORT, FY 2013 DLNSEO LANGUAGE SUSTAINMENT

1. **Purpose:** To report on training funded by the Defense Language and National Security Education Office (DLNSEO), administered by the HQMC International Affairs Program Office, for the period of 23 Feb 2013 to 10 Mar 2013.
2. **Summary.** The DLNSEO funded language sustainment program enabled a study trip to the region of Italy where the language originated and is free from regional dialect. The 16 day intensive study program (8.5 hours per weekday) was scheduled away from normal home and work responsibilities to permit a total focus on improving language proficiency and prevent any distraction from interfering. In addition to the lessons, the location encouraged real-life practice with locals who spoke true Italian. Thus, the learning environment was extended beyond the classroom and I was able to absorb and understand more of the culture.
3. **Discussion.** Intensive instruction was effective for the following reasons:
 - a. High quality and personalized instruction at Parola Italia assisted in the attainment of my primary objective: improving language proficiency with a focus on listening and reading comprehension. I was rotated amongst different instructors, lesson plans, topics, and teaching methods every two hours throughout the day. The two weeks were not only effective in improving language proficiency, but efficient, and as a result I was able to learn more in less time.
 - b. The location in a dialect free region of Italy was worthwhile and assisted in the accomplishment of my secondary objectives: sustaining regional expertise and improving conversational abilities. Florence is recognized for its excellence in language training and is a cultural hub in the center of Italy. After the school day, I conversed with locals in social situations and visited cultural sights. An increased familiarization and appreciation of important cultural effects and phenomenon, and conversation about them, increased my regional understanding and expertise. The three location characteristics that enabled this included: away from home, dialect free, cultural rich locale.
 - c. The ability to focus on language sustainment for a short but intense period of time was effective. It set the conditions for rapid improvement in a short time.
4. **Recommendation.** Intensive language sustainment training is an effective means to increase proficiency amongst officers who require personalized, high-quality, structured instruction and can commit an exclusive focus to improving language skills over a period of time. In addition, locations that encourage value-added interpersonal interaction and conversation should be sought out. For those officers willing and able to commit the time and effort away from primary billets to engage in language sustainment, intensive location-based schools will likely prove an effective means of improving proficiency quickly. In-country trips to local language schools should continue to be funded under the DLNSEO program.



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