

## **BILLET DESCRIPTION**

1. Name. Frank N. Quiles
2. Unit. Venezuelan Naval War College (Escuela Superior de Guerra Naval, ESGN)
3. Location. Caracas, Venezuela.

The exact address is:

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4. Rank.. LCDR.

The school is designed for Lieutenant Commander/Commander's (LCDR/CDR's). Promotion from LCDR to CDR obviously would not present a problem. However, a promotion from CDR to Captain (CAPT) would introduce an undesirable situation which could bring about difficulties within the school structure and target student body established within their mission.

Upon graduation, I will have 14 years of service. In the contrary, the average time of service of the other students is around 16 years. Additionally, upon graduation, it is estimated that over 80% of the students will be promoted to the next higher rank (12 Venezuelan CDR's and 20 Venezuelan LCDR's), as planned in their career progression.

5. Billet title. Student (Oficial Superior Cursante, OSC, or in English, Senior Officer Scholar) in the Curso de Comando de Estado Mayor Naval (Naval Command and Staff Course) or CCEMN.

6. Billet Description. Billet Sequence Code 99990.

In every aspect possible, you are in a student environment while attending ESGN where the overall Mission and Vision of the school is as follows:

***Mission:***

**“To carry out teaching, investigations, and scope of knowledge activities that require the OSC to deeply study the requisite knowledge, principles, and doctrine that will foster the perfection of command, conduct of war, and naval administration.”**

*Vision:*

**“To be in the most competent Military Educational Institution of the highest educational norms in the country, the obligatory point of reference for the experts and investigators in the Art of Naval Warfare, Sea Power, Naval Strategy, and National Security of the nation; the melting pot of the leaders with the knowledge and values necessary to exercise command with the wisdom and intelligence that war as much as peace demands; center of Naval War Gaming, that shapes the laboratory where the responses to the hypothesis of conflict will be anticipated in order to give a solution to problems of the Navy with that which will reaffirm the name “The Ship’s Log of Venezuelan Naval Thought.” “**

Essentially, the school has the responsibility to generate Officer’s who, in the near future, will assume Major Command and definitely serve in Naval or Joint Staffs. My class, CCEMN XXXVII, consisted of members from the National Guard (not reservists but an actual branch of the Armed Forces, in charge of Customs, National Parks, Anti-Drug Law Enforcement, Coastal Patrol, Border Control, Immigration, and any security issue as directed by the President), Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Supply Corps, Surface Warfare, Engineering Duty Officer equivalents, and Submarine Warfare. Many of the SWOS and Submariners have already completed their XO tours and many others have had commands of Patrol Boats, small Transport ships, Coast Guard patrol crafts, platoons/battalions, or shore commands. Additionally, the course consisted of officers invited from 3 other foreign countries, which included South Korea, Dominican Republic, and Argentina. Furthermore, it is not uncommon to see officers from other Latin American and Caribbean countries.

The faculty has the requirement to evaluate the OSC in all aspects of performance. Especially during scheduled class, where the faculty is present in the class for the sole purpose of evaluating the class discussion (intended to be directed by the student body) and writing an evaluation about the students comments. Additionally, during the plethora of student briefings, the faculty will evaluate the OSC in order to develop his ability to understand and analyze situations. Additionally, these evaluations will be required of each OSC, upon the finalization of group projects, whereby the students will evaluate their peers in their assigned group. There will be no tests for any material, but your performance is measured through written papers, class assignments, and group presentations.

Typical class sizes vary between 25-40 students.

Before the official instruction period, there was 2 weeks of indoctrination. Following this indoctrination period, we commenced the 41 week curriculum (3 Sep, 2001 – 28 Jun 2002), with a 3 week vacation during Christmas (abnormal, usually 2 weeks), 1 week for Carnival (2<sup>nd</sup> week in Feb), and 1 week during Easter. Additionally, the class will take a trip to a series of countries in order to assist in formation in the capacity to conduct “Country Studies.” This study trip usually is about three weeks and is totally paid by the Venezuelan Navy. During our trip, we visited Trinidad, Barbados, and St Martinique. Obviously, due to the Caribbean location of Venezuela, the studies of these countries are important to the Venezuelan Maritime Strategy. In order to facilitate the liberty of travel to whatever country the school selects for the class trip, it is highly recommended to have an Official Passport. Additionally, this is a requirement prior to entering Venezuela.

While assisting the ESGN, the student will have the opportunity to receive a Master’s Degree from the Universidad Central de Venezuela (UCV) in Business Science Administration. The thesis for this Master’s requires a final presentation after the termination of the naval course which requires the presence of the student. The opportunity to realize this presentation is offered twice a year by the UCV, in March and September. Additionally, prior to the final presentation, the student is required to complete a pre-presentation report of his thesis in December. This pre-presentation is both a requirement for graduation from UCV and ESGN. In my situation, I was unaware of the requirement and opportunity to receive a Master’s Degree prior to my negotiating of orders, so my career progression was planned only to assist the ESGN course (ending 28 June, 2002). Due to this restriction, the ESGN provided me a waiver, whereby the requisite of a pre-presentation of thesis was removed, which ultimately facilitated my attainment of all established requirements mandated for graduation from the Venezuelan Naval War College. All students have the opportunity to fulfill the final thesis presentation in two years, however, due to the location of the school in another country, the language proficiency required, and the intensity of my follow-on tour, I decided that any attempt to fulfill the requirements for the Master’s at UCV would be fruitless and merely become a wish and not a reality.

Graduates from the ESGN can receive JPME I credit upon presentation of your graduation diploma to PERS 45J following graduation.

All students will complete training in the Venezuelan procedure for problem solving of naval administrative tribulations, which is also a prerequisite for graduation from ESGN. The students will do two studies where the group is required to solve a problem related to the Navy, at a level pertinent to a Naval Staff. Some examples, in my case, was the improvement of the quality of vehicles offered by the naval service in the Caracas area and the academic improvement of cadets at the Venezuelan Naval Academy. This process, translated is called the Staff Investigation Technique, or in Spanish “Técnica de Estudio de Estado Mayor (TEEM).”

There are three phases during the course of instruction, where there is a gradual progression from academics to analysis and War Gaming. The first phase is loaded with many of the requirements for the Master’s Degree in Business Administration (MBA) and

basic Naval Operations (my class 3Sep-14Dec). The second phase concentrates on Naval Planning, Strategy, National Security, Geopolitics, Basic War Games, and International Relations (7Jan-5Apr). The third phases concentrates on the remainder of the MBA courses, more complex War Games (using Jane's Fleet Command software) and a Naval Planning, the "Country Study" trip, and the final TEEM (8 Apr-28 Jun). A list of courses is attached in Enclosure (1).

Class hours start at 0700 and are scheduled until 1630. However, most of the duration of the class in the course was scheduled until 1340, whereby the student will have the remainder of the day to work on group projects. These group projects are the main focus of the course, whereby there is a certain theme selected relative to the course, which a group is required to develop under certain objectives in a given timeline. Each group will have a leader designated and the leaders are often rotated to facilitate performance evaluations by the staff.

During the first two phases, the student was required to be in class at 0650 for a brief discussion/reading of the Venezuelan constitution followed by a five minute speech/analysis of a famous quote. These quotes are selected by the student at the beginning of the course. The faculty will select, from your list, which ones they want you to analyze and present. Ten days before your speech, you will have to provide hand-written analyses to the teaching staff for review and on the day of your presentation, you will talk in front of all the teachers and student body about your quote and analyses. This process is called a "Máxima." During the third phase, the Máximas and reading of the constitution are no longer required, but interviews, which start at 0650 in front of the entire class, are conducted by the teaching staff concerning whatever topic the professor assigned feels like discussing. Official instruction always commences at 0700.

Classes are divided into 45 min periods and each class consists of 2 periods before a break. This will prove challenging at first due to the language barrier and the amount of effort required to stay focused in a foreign language for 1.5 hours straight. There are class breaks at 0830-0840, 1010-1030, and 1200-1210. Additionally, the course will consist of extensive amounts of Conferences where there will be distinguished guest speakers who support the school's mission and curriculum. Enclosure (2) listing the topics studied and the personalities who conducted Conferences are included.

Every Wednesday at 1500, there is a mandatory Sports Day where the popular team sport is Softball, however many students opt to exercise instead.

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are offered at the school at no charge. Additionally, all of the coffee you can drink is offered between school hours (break periods), but not during class time. Bringing food or drink to class is prohibited.

There are a series of Special Lunches organized throughout the course, 9 in total, whereby selected students give an opening and closing speech over selected topics revolving around culture and traditions of the world, mostly concentrated in Latin America.

The class schedule is very condensed and the opportunity for leave is highly discouraged. The student will be required to request leaves of absence from the ESGN for any day which you would like to be excused from class. Essentially, the reason needs to be a really good one, like Household Goods Shipments or important family matters. All others will more than likely be disapproved. Furthermore, the typical American Holidays (Thanksgiving, Veterans Day, etc...) are not recognized in Venezuela and you are not excused from class to celebrate them.

The ESGN has a limited library and computer facility with internet access. There are only 2 computers available for student use connected to the internet. It is essential that every student has a laptop with the software for a zip drive, Word, and PowerPoint, (common to share zip drives between classmates, this is the preferred manner of mass media storage and exchange amongst students), a 1.44 MB disk drive, a CDROM drive, USB connection, and a network card and cable (there are a few connections throughout the school). Some form of drive or Infrared device which can transfer files greater than a 1.44 MB is necessary due to the size of many group projects composed of PowerPoint presentations larger than the floppy capacity. Due to the massive amount of presentations, a good working knowledge of PowerPoint is necessary. Additionally, the student has to pay for all photocopies at the library. I highly recommend that the student who comes here has a fax/copy machine at home. This facilitates your study abilities. All information for every project I developed was received from the Internet. Additionally, I ordered a majority of material from Amazon and Barnes and Noble (which you can receive at Armed Services Post Office in the American Embassy). I recommend the student acquire or become familiar with the reading list in Enclosure (3) before arriving to this course.

Undoubtedly, the capacity to speak Spanish is indispensable. The course offered at DLI prepares the future student to speak at very basic levels. However, if the student arrives to ESGN without fear to speak and offers his opinions and analysis openly, his capability and language proficiency will undoubtedly increase. Additionally, classmates will gain an increased respect for you due to your efforts and of course your country of origin. Almost all themes are revolved around the thoughts and actions of the USA, so when the USN Naval Officer speaks, the class and faculty are "all ears" and attentively listening to the American perspective. In this sense, you will be able to openly represent the United States in a manner very importantly, which undoubtedly projects, and at times focuses, the American understanding upon the future Venezuelan Commanders and Staff Officers.

The students do stand duty (once a month depending on the class size), however, the foreign Officers are not part of the duty schedule.

If the Officer comes unaccompanied or is single and does not desire to find a home on the economy, the school does provide a room to share with at least 4 other Officers.

We did have a social fee which the class elects to pay at the beginning of the course. Our fee, which we voted, was between \$15-20, depending on the exchange rate. This fee pays for refreshments at all Sports Days and any unexpected costs which arise for the class.

Throughout the course, there will be various committees which all students are required to be a member. These include social, sports, cultural, and finance. These committees will organize 2 cultural events, 2 social events, and many sport's days. The finance committee obviously collects money to manage all of these events.

Just for a point of interest, the Venezuelan Navy consists of the Marine Corps and Coast Guard, which all wear the same uniform. Furthermore, the Navy does not have a clear dividing line between the roles of the Coast Guard and the Navy, like the USA. Additionally, the Venezuelan Surface Navy consists of specialists whereby Chief Engineers or Combat Systems Officers will always remain in this specialty; this is much like the European and Royal Navy systems. But at lower levels, these officers do have opportunity to command smaller vessels. However, there is an effort to change to the USN model of Surface Warfare Officer (SWOS).

The main naval base is located in Puerto Cabello, which is about 180 miles to the west of Caracas.

7. Type of Aircraft/ships. None.

8. Type of Training. Spanish training at Defense Language Institute (DLI).

9. Qualifications.

- a. Required. Warfare Qualification. For Surface Warfare Officers (SWO): Department Head School and TAO course completion, qualification, and experience.
- b. Desired (but not mandatory). Executive Officer course and experience and any previous Command experience (Patrol Craft, Mine Countermeasures, or Minesweeping naval vessels).

10. Security Clearance. Secret

11. Remarks.

- a. Geopolitical Introduction.

Venezuela enjoys the position of having direct access to the Caribbean and the Atlantic Ocean, in addition to a close proximity to the Panama Canal. Furthermore, their enormous supply of petroleum, distributed by sea, makes them undoubtedly a maritime nation which relies upon their sea routes to support their economy and livelihood. As a number four oil supplier to the USA and an important member in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC, presently their number four oil producer in conjunction with possessing the second largest oil company in the world Petroleum of Venezuela, (PDVSA), Venezuela possesses important links to the USA and the Western Hemisphere. Furthermore, their possession of a portion of the Andes mountain range and

sharing of the International Amazon River, places them as a very important player in South American politics.

One issue which has recently received additional attention in Venezuela is the recent offensive which Colombia has taken against the present insurgents, principally the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), National Liberation Army (ELN), and the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC). All three of these groups have been listed as terrorist organizations by the USA. Venezuela is unfortunately linked to this offensive due to their location as a neighbor to Colombia, especially since the regions where most of these guerrillas operate are along the Venezuelan and Colombian border. Due to this dangerous border, Venezuela has a direct interest in containing the guerrillas in Colombia in preventing their fleeing of the Colombian offensive towards the Venezuelan territory. Furthermore, there exists a fear that due to the US promises to eliminate terrorists, Plan Colombia, and the existence of terrorists in Colombia, that the USA may send troops into South America and exert its indisputable military power. For Venezuela, any strengthening of any neighbor in their region to a level higher than their own is considered threat. Especially when Colombia and Venezuela have a number of unresolved borders disputes (La Guajira and the Gulf of Venezuela).

Presently, Venezuela has petitioned to the United Nations for reclamation of a portion of the zone to the east of the Esequibo river region (almost half of the present country of Guyana) which was claimed to be unjustly taken from them prior to the 1894 agreement negotiated by the USA between Venezuela and Great Britain

There are 23 states in Venezuela and Caracas is the capital of the country. Caracas is located to the south of the Avila mountain range in a valley 2,400 feet above sea level. Caracas is a modern city with ample public transportation and services which one can find within any modern city in the USA. Besides cities in Brazil, Venezuela is probably the most westernized city in South America, thanks mostly due to their dependence on oil production. The climate is tropical where there are really two seasons, summer (sunny May-July and Oct-Dec) or winter (rainy season Jan-Apr and Aug-Oct).

The regions of Venezuela consist of the Amazons (the south), the Plains (the middle), the Caribbean (the north), Gran Sabana (south-east), and the Orinoco Delta (the east), the Andes (southwest), outlying islands in Caribbean, and the Lake Maracaibo region (the north-west). Each of these regions possess striking differences which range from pristine beaches in the Caribbean, mountainous terrain in the Andes, plains for farming and cattle raising in Los Llanos (cowboy paradise), lush jungles in the Orinoco and Amazon river regions, breathtaking waterfalls in the Gran Sabana/Bolivar region, and deserts in the north west coast in the city of Coro. Essentially, there are all types of terrain for whatever type of adventure or trip inspires your interest.

#### b. Politics

The political system is a pluralistic democracy where there exists more than one political party based on active participation in the government by the people where nothing is above the law. This is very representative to the US government.

One important figure in the Venezuelan history is Simon Bolivar, better known as “El Libertador” or the Liberator, whom unified almost all of South America and Panama excluding Argentina y Chile by the year 1823. His fight for independence from Spain was extremely important to the region and his popularity has resurfaced once again in the Revolutionary process which the government of Venezuela is attempting to realize.

Recently, the President of the Republic, Hugo Rafael Chavez Frías of the Venezuelan Revolutionary Movement (MVR) Party, has come under heavy criticism due to his distancing of the long time traditional relationships with the USA, relations with Cuba and personal friendship with Fidel Castro, exercising and formulation of the Bolivarian Revolution which has been loosely applied and interpreted by his political party which is often evaluated as against the recently created Constitution (1999), accused violations of abuse in freedom of the press, his aggressive remarks against the middle to upper class of the nation which has created a larger gap amongst these two distinct populations of the privileged few and the poor majority, supposed restrictions and threats with regards to freedom of the press, and his attempt to control the main money generator of the country PDVSA. These actions manifested into the unsuccessful coup d'état of 11 April, 2002 whereby the opposition forces remained in power for about 36 hours and Chavez was returned to power by 13 April, 2002 following his brief imprisonment by the Armed Forces. His quick return to power was due to the following facts:

1. There existed a lack of a clear resignation of President Chavez following the coup d'état (which initially appeared to have occurred). Over the next 36 hours, following the supposed transition of power, it became clear that Chavez never did officially resign, thus signifying an undemocratic change of power which threatened many of the Venezuelans pride as being one of the longest standing Democracies in Latin America.
2. The de facto government abolished all elected institutions such as the National Assembly, Constitution of 1999, and all Mayors and Governors. This spurred the military to reject their initial support of this government and furthermore stirred loyalist MVR supporters to take to the streets in order to regain power and bring about the release of President Chavez. All of which occurred without significant local press coverage. This final change of power, back to President Chavez, was reported over CNNespañol and CNN international before it was aired in the local news. This lack of efficient reporting inside of Venezuela (which appeared intentional by journalists who were running for preservation of their life and also desired to not let Venezuela know that the events which they supported in the previous 36 hours had been defeated) was supposedly due to the subjective reporting by Venezuela's press organizations, which was resultant to Chavez's previous aggression towards journalists prior to 11 April.
3. A military clearly divided, political, and institutionalized to the point that they believe that any dissolution of elected institutions warrants their action in the name of the protection of the rights of Venezuelans. This civic duty has been influenced by their involvement in Plan Bolivar 2000 where the military has been expected to partake in many civil projects, all in the name of

“development of the country.” Furthermore, a perceived inability of the National Assembly to act quickly and justly in the resolution of any national crisis.

c. Culture and Religion

The culture in Venezuela is strongly influenced by their Spanish heritage through the colonies of Spain until the mid 1800's, Caribbean ways of life, Amazonian and Andean indigenous history, the period of slave trading due to Venezuela's rich past in Cocoa and Coffee trading, and its close proximity to North America.

The most popular sports in Venezuela are baseball, basketball, and soccer, in this order of precedence. Baseball by far is the most popular sport and the Venezuelan season is staggered in a manner which prevents an overlap with the US baseball season.

The primary religion in Venezuela is Catholic which consists of approximately 96 % of the population. The rest of the religions are present, but in smaller numbers and English speaking religious services are offered throughout the city.

d. Crime

Since the year of 1999, the crime rate in the main city of Caracas has dramatically risen 30%. The city has aggressively tried to control the problem through improvements in the training and organization of the Metropolitan Police Force. One measure in this training/improvement phase is the ex-police commissioner of New York City, William J Bratton, was hired to consult the Caracas Police and formulate improvements within the system. This has been marginally effective and essentially, the common crime is theft. The primary cause for this form of crime is undoubtedly the amount of poverty which exists in the capital city. There have been some estimates that between 70-80% of the population lives in poverty and 20-30% of the people are of the middle to upper classes. These two classes have considerable differences in their culture and beliefs and increased tension between these two classes has recently increased due to the disagreement with the government of President Chavez (who appeals to the lower class). Inevitably this has caused more crimes against the more privileged population. However, the poverty has increased and the crimes are being committed against the poorer people and have taken a step towards an “uncontrollable downward spin” where more deaths and violent crimes are occurring.

One important piece of information is that no violence has been directed towards US citizens. It has been very random and opportunistic vice internationally political. However, following the coup attempt in April 2002, there were people who believed the US was somehow involved due to their disagreements with the present government and lack of condemning the coup immediately after the event. This belief has caused a somewhat increased sense of tension towards the US and more recently, the US State Department has authorized the travel of dependents to the safe haven of the USA (as of 16 April, 2002) under the regulations of Joint Force Travel Regulations Chapter 6.

It is recommended that you and your wife have a cell phone while here. The Military Group provided me with a loaner, where I was required to buy phone cards to pay for my calls. We purchased one here for about \$100 which my wife used. The acquisitions of these phones is almost a necessity and if you can guarantee that phones purchased in the US will work here in Venezuela, buy your phone before arriving and activate a phone account with the local companies (TELCEL a branch of Bell South in the USA, DIGITEL, or MOVILNET where the owner is CANTV, the national phone company). The calling cards are expensive and some frequent caller plans are cheaper, but they are based upon your usage and if you don't use the phone much, it is probably not worth the effort or money.

During the nighttime, the Police will drive around with their warning lights rotating but no sirens activated. This is merely a sign of presence. When a Police Officer intends to confront a situation or stop the subject of the crime, they will sound their sirens.

Credit and Debit Card fraud is a reality. Try to limit the use of your credit and debit card in the Venezuelan economy. There have been incidents of charges showing up on your card which you didn't purchase. This did happen to us, and the bank caught a charge in process which seemed strange to the authorizing agent at the bank and is the reason why the crime was stopped immediately. Essentially, our bank prevented any further charges against this card before major damage could be done. The matter was resolved without problem and we did not have to pay any unwanted charges. This incident happened 4 months after use of a credit card which I used only two times before Christmas in a very safe shopping mall. One additional word of caution is try to eliminate using your debit card at Automated Teller Machine's (ATM), there have been incidents where people wait to rob the people using the ATM. After the robbery, these criminals have been known to take the victim to different machines to try and have withdraw the maximum amount at each teller until either your account is empty or the ATM refuses to dispense more money. We avoided carrying debit cards and therefore not using ATM cards. We solely dealt in cash and conducted all money matters directly at the bank teller in the Embassy. This will take some getting used to, especially in the planning phase; you will be going to the bank a lot to cash checks for long weekends or travel periods.

Another common crime is pick pocketing and you need to try to exercise additional caution when in crowds.

Finally, I recommend that you register all credit cards with some form of insurance, like that offered by American Express, whereby if an erroneous charge appears on your account, which you can't resolve with the bank directly; the insurance will pay for the fraudulent expense with no questions asked. Furthermore, this service is useful when a wallet or purse is lost, whereby all that is required is one phone call, to the insurance provider, which will organize your receipt of all replacement cards. This convenience is valuable since all telephone calls required to cancel and reorder replacements will be long distance (1-800 numbers are not free overseas, except at a phone in the embassy which isn't always available, especially if you are on vacation).

e. Housing

The housing entitlements in Caracas for United States Navy personnel are sufficient to ensure you and your families' safety. Due to this requirement to ensure the safety of the service member and their dependents, you will be able to afford to live in some of the more exclusive, and by default, most secure areas of the city. The US Embassy is required to inspect your apartment for security prior to your acceptance and signing any rental agreement. Their requirements are no houses and apartments must be above the third floor with ample locks on all accesses. Furthermore, they will install a security system, a "panic button" in your bedroom, and connect your alarm system to their security monitoring system which allows quick alert and ordering of the police to your home. The scope of these security options will vary and depend on your location to the US Embassy

Based upon your Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) entitlement, you will be able to rent a 3 bedroom home in an exclusive apartment building with at least 2000 sq ft. When looking for a home, we found that many apartments have a pool, recreation area, storage area, and all kitchen appliances (most with dishwashers). Some did not have refrigerators and almost all lacked a washing machine and dryer. Each bedroom, almost always, will have its own bathroom, to include a guest bathroom when entertaining in the living room area. Some apartments will have a living room and separate TV room or office. Furthermore, all will have a servant's quarters with a bathroom and a service and guest entry to the apartment. The hardest part with selecting an apartment was finding a place that had everything, large bedrooms (typically smaller than USA), pool, great view, children play area, and balcony.

Be careful when negotiating an apartment that you don't have to pay for a complete cleaning, repainting, and refinishing of floors when you leave. The landlords do not require a deposit; however sometimes they require the renter to pay for the general repairs of apartments after your departure. The landlords accustomed to military renters are familiar that we don't want to pay this, however, many state department renters have this included in their contracts and is paid by their service, and since some landlords don't recognize the difference between the military and state department, they expect you to pay this fee as standard operating procedure. One way to negotiate around this issue is you could negotiate an apartment cheaper than your entitled BAH rate and the difference of your BAH (which you saved) could be applied every month to the basic maintenance fees which they expect to be paid during your departure and vacating of the premises. If you do this, ensure the lease is drafted to consider the maximum amount of BAH as your monthly rental fee. However, many of the landlords are flexible with this charge if they are comfortable with you and know they will be receiving their monthly rent reliably.

We do recommend bringing an extra refrigerator/freezer or freezer to store the food which you will be entitled to buy monthly, in bulk, from the commissary in the United States. This privilege is organized by the Venezuelan US Military Group (USMILGP-VE, other support services which they offer will be explained later) and allows the service member to buy directly from the commissary, whereby quantities are limited by a weight of 300lbs/month/family. The timeline and turnaround of orders is as follows; if you place an order in January, it will arrive in February. In this shipment,

liquids and dog food are prohibited, due to their normally high weight and likelihood to approach the mandated restrictions quickly when ordering these items.

The most important thing I can recommend, in hindsight when house hunting, is the selection of the area. We lived in Valle Arriba, two buildings from the US Embassy. Initially, we felt that we were not going to truly experience Venezuela due to our location in a suburb where a majority of the Americans in Caracas were living. We felt we were being closed minded "Americans." However, due to the closeness to the children's school and friends, English speaking community (helpful for my family since they did not speak Spanish), and Embassy our quality of life and security automatically increased. We truly realized this during the coup d'état which occurred in April. There was a large amount of violence and protests which materialized throughout the city during this national crisis. However, our neighborhood remained peaceful without any sense of insecurity. So, pick a place with security in mind, don't be paranoid, but remember the situation here is extremely fluid and can change quickly.

All rental agreements are required to be written in English and Spanish, whereby there is a statement which says that the English version takes precedence. Additionally, the rent should be negotiated in dollars. Furthermore, the USN will allow an advance of three months rent (bargaining tool which many landlords desire to help lower the rental price) which will be deducted from your pay the period following the receipt of the money for a duration equal to the months advance received. You are required to submit a DD2367 and a letter requesting this to the responsible Personnel Support Department via the Personnel Exchange Program (PEP) Coordinator at United States Naval Forces Southern Command (USNAVFORSOUTHCOM) in Puerto Rico.

Some rental contracts possess a limit to monthly repairs which the renter is required to pay if something is damaged. The standard limit is between \$200-300/month. One way to prevent from having to pay this is to ensure the apartment is in perfect condition when you accept it; this will prevent excessive basic maintenance fees while you are residing in the apartment and minimal effort in personal repairs.

While stationed in Caracas, you will receive ample Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) in order to pay for the high costs of food and clothing and a utility recurring maintenance/miscellaneous allowance to pay for the high costs of electricity and phone services.

Additionally, you will receive a one time payment of Move in Housing Allowance (MIHA) miscellaneous which pays for the unexpected costs of moving into a home overseas and an entitlement called MIHA Rent for the Real Estate agent fee, which normally is 60% of the rent. Most agents are willing to wait until you receive the payment from the USN before they get paid. Finally, you are also entitled to MIHA security which will cover any costs required to make your home safe and abide by the standards enforced by the Embassy. However, this should not be a problem since most landlords will add these changes if necessary.

The electricity provided in Venezuela is the same as the US; additionally the styles of plugs with the exception of the dryer are compatible. Electric clothes dryer plugs are very different than the US. I was required to purchase a new electrical outlet to facilitate using my dryer from the USA. This was easily installed but hard to find. I had a lot of help from the Venezuelan US Military Group (USMILGP-VE) drivers who knew exactly where to go and find this device.

Look at the following websites to try and see the homes/apartments available and their respective quality in Caracas, [www.vzla.com](http://www.vzla.com) and [www.vzla.com](http://www.vzla.com)

For information on BAH, COLA, MIHA entitlements, recommend that you consult the following web site, [www.usmilitarygroup.com](http://www.usmilitarygroup.com) whereby per-diem, DLA, and TLA rates are available for your review.

All buildings are also required to have 24 hour guards and controlled entry before the State Department approves your apartment

While in Venezuela, we hired a live-in maid who worked 5 days a week. This service was extremely cheap and useful. For one month, we paid a maximum of \$350. Our maid cleaned every day, washed clothes, cooked, babysat, and ironed. However, you do need to be very careful in the selection process and we recommend you hire someone recommended from someone you trust.

#### f. Civilian Services

You will be able to receive the basic television channels with a basic antenna; however, if you want CNN and other US channels, you will need cable (company is Super Cable) or DIRECT TV. Both of these services are available, but depend on their availability in your building. Some apartments are already cable or DIRECT TV ready, others are not. If your apartment is not prepared for this service, you may have to pay installation fees or sometimes negotiate that this be added to your rental contract and paid by the landlord. However, one basic piece of information, don't expect speedy service, this can take up to 6-8 weeks to install/activate or 2-3 weeks to activate (if the service is already installed). This also applies to any telephone problems. When you move into your home, all services will already be connected (except cable or DIRECT TV) and running and the landlord is required to pay up to the date you moved in, following this date, you are obviously responsible

The Internet is primarily available through three means, CANTV (national phone company with either dial-up or DSL), Super Cable (DSL cable connection), or TELCEL (DSL or dial-up). When checking on DSL, some buildings are not capable of receiving Super Cable DSL and you cannot advance their planned schedule, the same situation exists with CANTV. However, TELCEL has more of a demand based system whereby when there is a demand, they install the system when they have the supplies (which come from the US and at times their installation schedule is slow). TELCEL installation fees are approximately \$300. CANTV and Super Cable have a flat installation rate. CANTV has the cheapest monthly rates for modem connection and DSL, TELCEL has highest

installation costs and comparable monthly fees for DSL. However, Super Cable has the cheapest installation and monthly rates for their DSL service (but you would be lucky if they are capable of providing this service to your building, availability is limited). You will need internet to do your studies, so plan on getting it for survival and as your connection to the USA for email, online shopping, and news.

You will need to receive a water service (take the recommendation of the company to use from the guards or building manager) while in Caracas once a week. You will need to pay a one time fee to buy the bottles and dispenser. Each week, these 5 liter bottles are exchanged for full bottles of water. We got 4 bottles a week for a family of 2 adults, 2 children, and one baby. The tap water is not drinkable, but you can cook and wash with it. Additionally, you will need to wash all vegetables with water other than tap water. You can use the water from a water service or buy aquatabs to sterilize the water for washing of fruits and drinking. One product which was extremely valuable, but is no longer available in Venezuela was FIT (granule form is the best). This product is necessary to wash your vegetables and I recommend you stock-up on this before you arrive to Venezuela.

Almost all homes do not have screens on windows and not all have air conditioning, so the likelihood of mosquitoes entering the home is high. So we recommend you get some mosquito netting.

Newspaper service is available. We recommend getting a local newspaper delivered, such as El Nacional (Spanish), El Universal (Spanish) or The Daily Journal (English). However, El Nacional and El Universal have websites where you can review the paper for free ( [www.elnacional.com](http://www.elnacional.com) or [www.eluniversal.com](http://www.eluniversal.com) ). Additionally, newsstands are plentiful and you will be able to buy them easily from the vendors.

g. Embassy Services ( [www.usaembassy.org](http://www.usaembassy.org), [www.usaembassy.com](http://www.usaembassy.com) )

While stationed in Caracas, the American Embassy provides several important services which facilitate your tour. As a result of this, in addition to your personal safety and international agreements for visiting foreign military personnel, you will be required to check-in to the Embassy.

The Embassy offers a basic commissary service which requires a \$100 deposit, whereby you will receive a \$75 refund when you leave. This commissary is not affiliated with the Department of Defense (DOD), rather it is an Embassy attempt to run a convenience store with American products acquired from a supplier. Often the prices can be expensive. Additionally, there is a Barber, Dry Cleaning Service, Photo Developing (we preferred Clark Photo Labs by mail), the State Department of Morale Welfare and Recreation and Family Services Office (Community Liaison Office, CLO), and most importantly a Bank.

While here in Venezuela, we found that due to the bank available in the Embassy (Banco Provincial), we were not required to get a Venezuelan checking or savings account. You will be able to pay for your electric, phone, and Super Cable bills directly at

this bank using US \$ checks. We paid for our DIRECT TV and Internet directly with a credit card where we did not have one single problem. The name of the currency in Venezuela is the Bolivar (BS).

The Embassy also will issue you and your wife an Embassy ID card and a Carnet. The ID card is for access to the Embassy and the Carnet is necessary by Venezuela law. Prior to receiving the Embassy ID card, you will be required to attend a security brief offered by the Regional Security Officer (RSO) in the Embassy. The carnet is like a government identification card which identifies you as an official or diplomatic representative of the USA. In order to get this accreditation, you will need about 4 passport photos for you and your wife and your Official passports.

An Official passport is required to enter the country in addition to an entry Visa for all family members and service members. Ensure that the visas are multiple entry and cover the entire period of your orders. However, in reality, all that is truly needed is a Visa to get you and all of your family members into the country; the American Embassy will handle any extensions. Younger children are not required to receive the carnet or embassy ID card. One issue which is important is to have command sponsorship of dependents and entry approval when you arrive. I also recommend you have at least 10 passport photos per person with numerous copies of your orders in order to satisfy their spontaneous requirement.

When you get your car or buy one while here, you will need an Embassy sticker to allow your car access to the Embassy grounds. This is easily obtained once you have the license plate and car information.

Due to our Official status while here, we are not required to pay the local sales tax. Due to this agreement, you can submit all receipts in a specific format, designated by the Embassy, in order to apply for a refund from the Venezuelan government. I have yet to receive a check, but have attempted every time possible, and of course any refund I receive will be welcomed.

Ensure that you receive a Welcome handbook from the Embassy upon check-in from the CLO, there is a plethora of useful information in this publication.

#### h. Relationship to United States Naval Forces Southern Command (USNAVFORSOUTHCOM) and USMILGP-VE

USNAVFORSOUTHCOM will be your primary Naval Command responsible for all aspects of administration during your stay in Venezuela. USNAVFORSOUTHCOM has a Personnel Exchange Program (PEP) Coordinator who will assist you with leave, transfer/receipt packages, fitness reports, travel claims, pay, etc. The PEP Coordinator will contact you upon receipt of your orders and will forward you all information needed to help explain your relationship with USNAVFORSOUTHCOM while at school. Their contact information is:

US Naval Forces Southern Command

PEP Coordinator  
PSC 813 Box 2  
FPO AA 34099-6004

Tel: 787-865-4987  
DSN: 831-4987  
Fax: 787-865-4483/4934  
Email: [pep@esgn.navy.mil](mailto:pep@esgn.navy.mil)

While stationed in Caracas at the ESGN, you will officially be assigned to the USMILGP-VE. Their primary function is to help provide training to the Venezuelan Military and their office is located in the main military base of Caracas, Fuerte Tiuna. Additionally, they have the responsibility to support all PEP personnel. Although you are assigned here as a Professional Military Education (PME) student, you are classified as a PEP in the USMILGP-VE and USNAVFORSOUTHCOM.

The USMILGP will also provide a loaner vehicle during your arrival and departure, depending on its availability. This car is very valuable during the periods in which your vehicle from the USA is in transit which can take 4-6 weeks to arrive in Venezuela.

Each branch of service at the USMILGP-VE has a branch section chief with whom you will be assigned. This Officer will assist you in all aspects of your tour in Venezuela and is the US Department of the Navy Officer whom will normally be a Marine Corps Major or Lieutenant Colonel.

The USMILGP-VE is extremely eager for you to try and organize trips to the US whereby you can help educate your classmates in the name of military training. Additionally, they will pay for, under specific training funds, certain lecturers to come to Venezuela to offer conferences and if the lecturer does not speak Spanish, they can provide an interpreter. I recommend you try to do arrange these visits early, since approval from the Venezuelan Navy is required and the receipt of approval is complicated due to the tight class schedule. Additionally, guest lecturers need to be planned into the ESGN school schedule.

Throughout the remainder of the document, there will be numerous references as to what services and functions which the USMILGP-VE and USNAVFORSOUTHCOM provide to help facilitate your Venezuelan experience.

i. Schools

There are two excellent schools which children are able to attend. They are Escuela Campo Alegre (ECA, [www.eca.edu.ve](http://www.eca.edu.ve)) and Colegio Internacional de Caracas (CIC, [www.cic.edu.ve](http://www.cic.edu.ve)). Both of these schools offer high quality education in English and modern educational and sport facilities. Spanish is taught at both schools and is incorporated into the students class schedule at all grades, kindergarten thru High School, and are divided into Spanish classes dependent upon their speaking ability. ECA

is located closer to the Embassy and tends to be where most State Department and USMILGP-VE children go for classes. Both schools offer websites with information concerning their curriculum, contact information, and admission requirements, to include admission applications (ensure you bring additional passport photos with you for the application process). You will not be required to do any paperwork until you arrive to Venezuela and check-in to the USMILGP-VE. Furthermore, bus services are available for both schools which are paid by the USMILGP-VE.

Ensure you have a copy of your updated page 2 with all children who will assist school listed. This is important because the Army, Marine Corps, and Air Force personnel have their dependents specifically listed on their orders, however, the USN does not do this and the people who process the paperwork at the USMILGP-VE are familiar with all services but the USN, because there are only 2 USN personnel in the country. If possible, arrange with your detailer to place your dependents names on your orders.

j. Drivers License

While here in Venezuela, you are allowed to drive for three months on your US Drivers License. During this period, you will be required to take a drivers test (eye exam and health questionnaire), complete the required paperwork, and pay the fees. All of this is organized by the US Embassy.

k. Driving Habits

All I can say about driving in Venezuela is you need to be very careful. The Venezuelans are extremely aggressive and impatient when in their car. Stoplights and stop signs are present and obligatory, but the people treat the lights as optional and ignore the signs. There is very little repercussion from the Police with respect to these actions, so the people continue to disobey these directives.

Traffic in Caracas is a reality, this is due to the cities high population and poor design of traffic schemes. Much of the city, except downtown, is built on hills, and as a result, most roads meander thorough the city and often dump into highly congested areas, along with about three to four other roads, patience is a virtue and defensive driving gains another definition.

Additionally, the use of horns is more common than the US. There appears to be an unknown language with their use that I have failed to decipher. However, I have found that rolling down your window and indicating where you want to go with your hand yields extraordinary results, better than your turn signal. Don't take offense to the horns in Venezuela, this will allow a more peaceful driving experience.

Due to the abundance of oil in Venezuela, gasoline prices are very cheap, almost 60-70% less than the United States and leaded gasoline is very popular. So, when you go to the gas station, you need to tell the serviceman (located at every service station) you want unleaded (Sin Plomo) before he fills the tank with leaded fuel.

The quality of maps in Venezuela differs in quality. I recommend you buy the series called MAPZONE (you can buy this at the embassy, we got ours as a welcome gift from the Embassy Community Liaison Office) and get the other free maps from the Embassy when you arrive. Between these maps, you will be able to manage trip planning. One other obstacle which you will learn to accept is that many of the roads lack street name signs, obviously complicating your driving experience. One additional recommended travel guide (Spanish) is Guia Vial by Miro Pópic.

The highways exterior to Caracas are of good quality and you are able to drive to many places of interest in the country.

There are laws with regards to children safety seats in vehicles, but they are loosely enforced. I recommend you abide by the US standards with regard to this issue.

### 1. Buying a Car

While I was stationed in Venezuela, I had to buy a car on the local economy. The process was fairly simple; however, cars maintain their value. An example in my case, I purchased a 1988 Ford Taurus for \$5000. I could not find an acceptable vehicle less than this price.

Once you decide to buy the vehicle, the owner will have to take the paperwork to a lawyer. Once the lawyer completes this information, you and the owner have to go to a Notary Public. Following this visit, the car is officially yours. All of these fees will be required to be paid by the buyer (between \$50-75). Once you have all of the transfer paperwork, following the notary public visit, you can take this info to the General Service Office (GSO) in the Embassy. The Embassy will process the paperwork to transfer the title, the fee for this was minimal, but can take between 1-3 months to receive.

The requirements for Auto Insurance are solely a liability policy which you can only buy from a Venezuelan Insurance company. There is a company which offers insurance in the US Embassy, and you can arrange all of your insurance needs or just the mandatory liability with this company. We insured the vehicle we brought (a collision and comprehensive policy) from the US with Clements International. They have a web site at [www.clementsintl.com](http://www.clementsintl.com). We had to insure this vehicle before it left the US in order to ensure it was covered immediately upon arrival, a requirement from the lien holder, so we were not able to negotiate a full policy with the company in the Embassy. However, what I understand, the US companies offer quicker settlements to claims on the comprehensive or collision policies.

The plates which you receive from the vehicle you purchased will remain and there is no other form of registration fees or process required. If you ship a vehicle from the US, it will be delivered to the US Embassy for pick-up and you need to check-in with the GSO to provide them with a phone number so they can contact you when the vehicle arrives. The Embassy will also issue you license plates which identify your vehicle as a Foreign National. For sending the vehicle to the US, you arrange the paperwork and drop-off directly with the GSO in the Embassy.

I recommend any vehicle which you bring or buy be something common, reliable, and easy to fix. Many foreign makers of vehicles like Volvo, Mercedes, or BMW are expensive to repair and there are few specialists who can reliably repair them. Chrysler, GM, Ford, Honda, Toyota, Daihatsu, and Fiat are popular.

m. United States Defense Attaché Officer (USDAO)

You will not be attached to the USDAO, but they are in the US Embassy and I recommend you maintain a relationship with this Officer, they often provide interesting information and perspectives about Venezuela. There is a USDAO for each service in Venezuela.

n. USMILGP-VE and CLO videos and CLO pool passes

The USMILGP-VE and CLO have American videos to check-out for free. Additionally, the CLO does offer pool passes to the local 5 star hotels, which provide a nice atmosphere to take children.

o. Mail

While in Caracas, you will be provided a box at the APO. This is very important, especially if you plan on shopping online. My recommendations are:

- 1) Send everything priority, because anything below priority is loaded as space is available on the plane to Caracas.
- 2) Take heed to the size limitations, which are as follows;

Length	Combined Length and Girth
42"	72" length and girth combined
over 42" to 44 "	24" girth
over 44" to 46"	20" girth
over 46" to 48"	16" girth
Maximum length is 48"	

- 3) Ensure any gifts you buy for Christmas are sent by the end of November in order to ensure they are here by Christmas Day.

Your address will be:

USMILGP-VE  
Unit 4980  
APO AA 34037

All of your mail sent to this address will be received at the APO in the Embassy and forwarded to the USMILGP-VE for your daily collection.

p. Medical Care/TRICARE/Dental

All medical care is received through facilities located in the economy. Caracas is a modern city and you will receive good care while here. Many of the dentists and doctors studied in the USA, so finding an English speaking professional won't be a problem. Furthermore, overall, the costs for care are cheaper (possibly since the Doctors are not required to possess the malpractice insurance).

Higher quality care is provided in the Clinics vice the Hospitals, so recommend you locate a good clinic close to your home.

When you arrive, ensure that you enroll all family members and yourself in TRICARE. When someone requires care, you need to pay the fees initially, save the receipts, fill out the required paperwork and turn it in to the USMILGP-VE. The USMILGP-VE will process the paperwork and you will receive your money in 3-4 weeks. The same process works for Dental.

There is a military hospital at the main military base of Caracas, Fuerte Tiuna, which you and your family can use, but we felt was not necessary due to the efficient service which TRICARE provided in the area.

Many of the routine shots can be administered from the Nursing staff in the Embassy for free. Additionally, the nurse will provide you with a medical handbook where there is a lot of useful information which you will be able to use to make your stay in Caracas much safer and healthier. Additionally, this book lists of Caracas Doctor's, Dentists, Clinics, and Hospitals.

One issue you will need to decide upon is enrolling in an Ambulance service. This is not covered by TRICARE, however, there is some discussions and debates if they will cover it in the future. I do recommend you receive this, because if you are not enrolled in this service and the necessity for an ambulance arrives, the ambulances have been known to take longer to reach your destination. We paid about \$30/month for our entire family (3 children, my wife, and I). The service paid for itself in the long run, because I had to use the service once to receive stitches, a doctor and paramedic arrived at my home and administered the required medical services at the comfort of my kitchen table. What most impressed me was I did not have to wait in a crowded hospital waiting room. So the service, if used, will prevent inconvenience, is reasonably cheap, is of good quality, and ensures a high degree of stability and medical security for your family. The nurses' handbook from the Embassy offers phone numbers to the companies available and every two to three months they organize visits from all companies in Caracas, which permits you to enroll in the comfort of the Embassy if desired.

q. Newcomers Club of Caracas (NCC)

While here in Venezuela, my wife joined the NCC and was able to enjoy from the many benefits which this club offered. They offered a lot of useful information (to include a binder full of information such as; English speaking church services, recommended

restaurants, common Spanish phrases not found in the dictionary or particular to Venezuelans, shopping and cooking terms, etc.) about Venezuela and they are recognized by the US Embassy. The club organizes many social activities, shopping trips, and bazaars for mostly English speaking people. This club is something to consider and simply facilitates the indoctrination and enjoyment of Venezuela, which at times can be a difficult transition period due to the language and culture differences. Moreover, the club is lead by many Venezuelans who wish to make your experience here positive and enjoyable.

r. Food

There are many supermarkets and you will not have a problem finding most food items. However, expect the US imported items to be very expensive (small box of cereal costs almost \$7). Additionally, most Venezuelan made equivalent products are at times quite different and of varying quality. My wife enjoyed shopping at the local open air markets where the quality and freshness of vegetables and basic food items are much higher than the supermarkets. Additionally, she went once a week to the local butcher where the service was personalized and of high quality. The butchers will prepare all of your meats personally while you watch, and the meat was better and cheaper than the supermarkets.

s. Shopping

Anything with a US name brand is two to three times more expensive. Sometimes you can find good sales, but they are rare. There are many shopping malls which tend to be more expensive but safer and offer secure and easy parking. However, there are some shopping districts where you can find good deals, but you need to be extremely careful and identify good areas, where often parking is a problem.

The Venezuelan military does have an organization similar to the US military exchange system, it is called IPFSA. The organization is somewhat different and open to civilians. This store offers, in a multiple small store commercial style, many of the equivalent things present in the US. The commissary equivalent is a civilian food chain where the prices really are not cheaper than stores on the economy. The IPFSA and commissary equivalent are both located in Fuerte Tiuna

Items which can be expensive here in Venezuela include children toys, computer and any digital products, and toiletry articles.

t. Ministry of Defense Identification Card

Once you check into ESGN, you and your wife should get a MOD Identification card (called MOD Carnet like our Armed Forces ID card). This is done at the main MOD headquarters and one of the Officers from the school will ensure you get this. This card is useful and can be used for all forms of identification requirements (more useful than the Carnet received from the Venezuelan Government via the US Embassy) which you will experience in addition to allowing you access to all military facilities.

u. Personnel Support Department

Your relationship with the PEP coordinator at USNAVFORSOUTHCOM will be the liaison with the PSD support offered in Jacksonville Florida. The PSD handles all aspects of your pay and transfer except arrival TLA and school costs for your children. All paperwork sent for PSD needs to go through the PEP Coordinator. PSD will also process your entitlement for Foreign Language Proficiency Pay (OPNAVINST 7220.7E) for your entitlements based upon your Defense Language Proficiency Test results received from DLI.

v. Vacation

While in Venezuela, it is extremely encouraged to take trips to some of the excellent places which Venezuela and the region has to offer. Popular trips include Los Roques, Gran Sabana, Margarita Island, Aruba, Curacao, Mérida, Los Llanos, Puerto la Cruz, and Morrocoy.

When traveling to the airport for official travel, the USMILGP-VE will take you at no charge. However, if you are traveling for pleasure, it is recommended that you organize with one of the USMILGP-VE drivers to take and pick you up at a minimal charge. This is a much safer and convenient form of travel to this airport which is at times extremely hectic. Furthermore, the driving of your vehicle and parking at the airport over the duration of your trip is not authorized or suggested.

Every international trip will require the payment of airport taxes which is not usually included in the plane ticket costs. Official and Diplomatic Passports receive a discounted Airport tax rate (almost 50%). The USMILGP-VE and CLO organize trips at decent prices, during popular vacation times, with a local travel agency.

w. Gym

There are no gym facilities in the ESGN. The main military base in Caracas is Fuerte Tiuna. This base offers a good gym facility however, is a little difficult to go to for exercise on a daily basis relative to the school and where most USMILGP-VE and Embassy people live. Running in Caracas is difficult due to the hilly and narrow roads and sometimes traffic patterns and large parks for this sport are also not easy to get too.

x. Uniforms

While in school, you will wear summer whites almost exclusively. You can wear cotton or Certified Navy Twill (CNT) summer whites. Also, every week there are days where you will be required to wear a suit or coat and tie with dress pants, not Dockers. There will be days when you are War Gaming that you will wear Khaki CNT's. Additionally, during special ceremonies, Service Dress Blues (SDB's) and Choker Whites with ribbons have been necessary.

It is highly recommended that the service member stock-up on all uniform items before leaving and have the US Navy Uniform Mail Order information available.

y. Conclusion

Throughout this report, it was attempted to try and provide all pertinent information required to ensure a successful overseas tour in Venezuela. The course at the ESGN is of high quality and does provide the student with an excellent opportunity to share ideas, culture, and a high level of knowledge with some of the more intelligent and capable members of the Venezuelan Armed Forces. Additionally, if you have a strong desire to learn Spanish, this is the premier assignment.

Venezuela has been an interesting, exciting, and personally enriching experience. In no ways was this tour easy, but it was definitely worth the effort. I truly feel that we have gained a greater appreciation of the world affairs in the western hemisphere where the United States is and will remain a key player. This enriched understanding has been achieved through the intense courses of instruction, cultural relationships, and the routine day- to-day of Venezuelan affairs.

## Course Topics

### Phase I

Business Communication  
Human Rights  
Ethics and Leadership  
Business Philosophy  
Formulation of Business Projects  
Management Theories  
Human Resources  
Business Information and Information Technology  
Political Science  
Decision Making (Analytical Approach)  
Naval Operations  
National Intelligence  
Business Strategic Planning

### Phase II

Geopolitics (with focus on Venezuela)  
Strategy (National, Defense, and Naval)  
National Security and Strategic Planning  
Naval Operational Planning  
Business Functions  
International Relations (Diplomacy)  
International Maritime Law and Law of Armed Conflict  
International Relations and Theory of Negotiations

### Phase III

Management and Organizational Change  
Logistics and National Mobilization  
Financial Management  
Aquatic Power  
National Strategic Operational Planning  
War Gaming Series

## Conferences

### Phase I

The State of the Venezuelan Crisis  
Leadership Crisis  
Deterioration of Institutions  
Difficulty of Consensus  
Proliferation of Conflicts  
Planning and Development of Projects  
State Responsibility with respect to Violations of Human Rights  
The Land War  
Rules of Engagement  
The Air War

### Phase II

Bi-national Relations between Brazil and Venezuela  
Natural Resources in Venezuela and their Geopolitical Impacts  
The Rationality of Opting for War  
Latin American Integration. Reality or Fiction?  
The Venezuelan Population  
Maritime Limit and Border Problems with Columbia  
Pending Venezuelan Maritime Borders  
Geopolitical Implications of Central America and the Caribbean for Venezuela  
Fluvial and Land Borders of Venezuela  
The Living Border between Venezuela and Brazil  
The Litigation between Venezuela and Guyana  
The Living Border between Venezuela and Columbia  
Subversive Warfare  
Economic Warfare  
Globalization and its Link with Security, Development, and Defense  
Business Leadership  
Political Leadership  
Naval Strategy  
Social Leadership  
The Venezuelan Geopolitical Conception  
Psychological Warfare

### Phase III

Venezuelan Naval Strategy, Capacities and Limitations  
The Actual Situation and Tendencies of Aquatic Transport en the World and in South America

Enclosure (2)

Formation, Training and Modernization of Human Resources en the Aquatic Sector  
National Resources and their Employment in Logistics in Support of Mobilization  
The Venezuelan Merchant Marine  
Port Services for Ships  
Navigation Companies and Intermediate Services of Transport  
Marine Recreation and Sports  
Venezuelan Ports and Sevices  
Assignment of Resources to the National Armed Forces through Public Credit Operations  
Army in the Theater of Operations  
The Exploitation of Energy Resources in Aquatic Areas  
The Air Force in the Theater of Operations  
The Exploitation of Hydrographic Resources  
The Naval Industry  
The Financial System  
The Aquatic Sector of the Legal System  
The Administration and Authority in Aquatic Areas

**Suggested Reading and Library List Strategy**

On War	Karl Von Clausewitz
The Art of War	Sun Tzu
Strategy	B.H. Liddel Hart
Quadrennial Defense Review	U.S. Department of Defense
Forward From the Sea	U.S. Department of Defense
NDP 1-5	U.S. Department of Defense or U.S. Department of Defense
Some Principles of Maritime Strategy	U.S. Department of Defense
The Influence of Seapower upon Naval History 1660-1783	Sir Julian Corbett  Alfred Thayer Mahan

**General Knowledge**

World Almanac	U.S. Department of Defense or buy one
World Atlas	Your preference
Book of Famous Quotes	Your preference
Culture Shock Venezuela	
Tourist Book	Your preference or U.S. Department of Defense
Venezuelan Expressions with Explanations in English	Rev. Joseph A Heim

**Naval International Law**

Annotated Copy of the Commander's Handbook on the Law of Naval Operation (Annotated Copy of NWP-1 compiled by the Naval War College) San Remo Manual	U.S. Department of Defense
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**Geopolitics and National Security**

Clash of Civilizations	Samuel P Huntington
World Power Assessment: a calculus of Strategic Drift	Ray S. Cline
The Prince	Nicholas Machiavelli
The Discourses	Nicholas Machiavelli
The Art of War	Nicholas Machiavelli
Plan Colombia	U.S. Department of Defense or U.S. Department of Defense or U.S. Department of Defense
National Security Strategy	U.S. Department of Defense

## **Management**

The Principles of Scientific Management	Frederick W. Taylor
General and Industrial Management	Henri Fayol
Functions of the Executive	Chester Barnard
Administrative Behavior: A Study of Decision Making Processes in Administrative Organizations	Herbert A. Simon
Diagnosing the System for Operations	Stafford Beer

## **Politics**

The Republic	Plato
The Nicomachean Ethics	Aristotle
Communist Manifesto	Karl Marx
Political Writings	John Locke

## **Economy**

The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money	John Maynard Keynes
Wealth of Nations	Adam Smith

## **Software**

Janes Fleet Command  
Word, Excel, and PowerPoint  
Iomega Zip Drive  
Some form of Electronic Dictionaries (English and Spanish with definitions)



Escuela Superior de Guerra Naval  
National Archives and Records  
Administration