



NEWS

United States Consulate General

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U.S. Forward Operating Location Welcomes New Commander

Lieutenant Colonel Richard J. Bailey Jr. relinquished command of the United States Forward Operating Locations (FOL) in Curaçao and Aruba to Lieutenant Colonel Tim Beers, today. The Change of Command is a time-honored military tradition which symbolizes the continuation of leadership and unit identity despite the change in individual authority. It also allows other airmen to personally witness the command authority passing from one officer to another. Passing the ceremonial flag from the old commander to the new commander physically represents this transfer.

Under the command of Lt. Col. Bailey surveillance flights from the FOL achieved many victories in the Caribbean counternarcotics efforts. Flights from the U.S. FOLs directly contributed to the seizure of 139 metric tons of narcotics with a street value of over \$2.7 billion USD and 372 counter drug arrests. Also during Commander Bailey's tenure, U.S. FOL military and civilian personnel volunteered their services in support of dozens of community projects to benefit the people of Curacao by partnering with various local organizations. Commander Bailey received a Meritorious Service Medal Second Oak Leaf Cluster for his accomplishments.

In his opening remarks, Commander Beers stated "It is imperative that we continue to support operations that disrupt transnational drug trafficking. I am convinced that our efforts will undoubtedly enable health, safety, and economic stability of the region and the entire Western Hemisphere."

Prior to taking command in Curaçao and Aruba, Lieutenant Colonel Beers was Training Support Division Chief, Joint IED Defeat Organization, Joint Center of Excellence, at Fort Irwin, California. His previous assignments were as a student at the Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, and as Squadron Director of Operations at a classified location. Lt Col Beers directed the largest and most diverse squadron in the wing, supporting National Agency, Department of Defense, and allied advanced weapons systems test and training programs. (full bio attached)

The U.S. FOL, 429th Expeditionary Operations Squadron, supports multi-national aircraft operations that conduct detection, monitoring and tracking missions supporting counter-drug

efforts in the region. U.S. FOL Curaçao was established as a result of a multi-lateral agreement between the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the United States whereby aircraft and crews deploy to the U.S. FOL on a temporary basis to conduct mission counter-drug operations.

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