

Bridging Aviation, Security, and Naval Leadership: A Multidisciplinary Career in National Service

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Dennis Sison Resuello is the Assistant Chief of Fleet Staff for Civil Military Operations, F7 of the Philippine Fleet, a major type command of the Philippine Navy located at Naval Operating Base-Subic, Zambales. Prior to his current role, he was appointed as the Fleet Provost Marshal of the Philippine Fleet. He was formerly a Professorial Lecturer at the Institute of Graduate Studies of the Philippine State College of Aeronautics (now the National Aviation Academy of the Philippines or NAAP). He graduated from the Philippine State College of Aeronautics Institute of Graduate Studies in 2019 with a Master's of Education in Aeronautical Management. In the same year, he presented his thesis on safety reporting culture at the Asian Virtual Conference on Multidisciplinary Research (AVCRM). In addition, in 2015, he received his Executive

Diploma in Defence and Strategic Studies (with Distinction) from the National Defence University of Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where his first academic Commandant's Paper on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) was chosen and published in Haigate Papers, a defence journal published by Malaysia's Ministry of Defence. He is a seasoned naval aviator (with senior pilot rating) and a naval flight officer, holder of Commercial Pilot License from the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines with Instrument Rating and a Flight Instructor Rating. He is also a Certified Security Professional of the Philippine Society of Industrial Security. He holds both Professional and Sub-Professional eligibility from the Civil Service Commission.

He held the positions as the former Chief of Naval Air Staff of the Naval Air Wing from the years 2022-2024 and also as Squadron Commander of the Naval Air Wing's Light Utility Patrol Squadron 31 "Maaasahan" - the Philippine Fleet's eyes and wings, in the years 2020-2022. In 2016, he was designated as the Deputy Chief Plans and Programs, C5, and Chief, Management and Fiscal Office of the AFP Education, Training, and Doctrine Command in Camp Emilio Aguinaldo, where he also served as an instructor and Directing Staff. In 2012, he was also the Annual Procurement Plant (APP) Branch Chief of the Naval Logistics Office, N4, as well as the Disposal Branch and Self-Reliant Defense Posture Branch. Prior to joining the uniformed service, he worked as a Revenue Computer Operator II at the Capital Gains Tax Unit, Assessment Division, Bureau of Internal Revenue, Region 1, in Calasiao, Pangasinan, in 1996. Captain Resuello does not consider himself perfect, but he strives to interact positively with his family, his coworkers, and his community. He collaborates with those around him, beginning at home and continuing at work and in the community. According to him, he requires each of them in order to achieve those goals and dreams. He would argue that all of these things are part of being a leader. Take the initiative to get things done, enjoy working with your organization, and create a better future. However, to thank and worship God every single day is the first and foremost order of the day.

Aviation as the Foundation of Professional Discipline

The basis of my career was developed in aviation. It took proficiency in aerodynamics, weather, flight systems, navigation, and human factors to become a Naval Aviator (with Senior Pilot Rating) and a Naval Flight Officer, as well as holder of a Commercial Pilot License with an Instrument Rating. The margin between success and failure is very small, and therefore, aviation is strictly regulated by international standards. As stated by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO, 2023), global aviation safety relies on the disciplined use of standardized operating procedures and risk-based safety management systems.

As I became an aviator, I learned that safety is proactive rather than reactive. The ICAO Safety Management Manual (2024) emphasizes the use of predictive hazard identification and safety reporting systems as two key components of modern aviation governance. These principles became a part of who I am as a person. Each time I did a mission planning, pre-flight inspection, conducted a risk assessment, or received a weather briefing, I was building a culture of vigilance.

When I earned my Flight Instructor Rating both in the military and civilian, my responsibility expanded even further. Teaching students how to fly requires not only technical skill but also the ability to use emotional intelligence and to communicate clearly. Instruction also requires evaluating human performance, identifying behavioral risks, and building confidence while consistently adhering to safety standards. This instruction influenced my approach to leadership while conducting naval operations, where mentorship and accountability coexist.

Aviation has taught me that leadership begins with self-discipline. Without personal rigor, those in authority cannot establish credibility.

Graduate Education and Systems Thinking in Aeronautical Management

Because of the need for theoretical grounding, I pursued further education by obtaining my Master of Education in Aeronautical Management at the former Philippine State College of Aeronautics (now National Aviation Academy of the Philippines or NAAP). The change in direction from my job then at Naval Air Wing (now Naval Air Warfare Force) caused me to view a different image entirely; when it comes to aviation, there is much more than just the technical aspect, there is also the organizational aspect (which consists of regulatory, security and safety issues), as well as human factor issues.

My thesis in graduate studies was on the reporting culture relating to safety; I chose this topic because I felt it very closely resembled my operational background, so that the reader can make their own deductions. Safety reporting culture is part of a company's organizational culture in which all personnel feel safe and comfortable reporting errors or hazards without fear of retaliation. Research on how high-reliability organizations depend on trust-based reporting (Reason, 2024) has been supported by additional research conducted in 2023 (IATA), which shows that safety culture is a major part of airline/aviation resilience.

In my research, I observed how theories of leadership, organizational trust, and the level of transparent communication among all personnel affect reporting behavior. The use of a structured data-collection method (Creswell & Creswell, 2023) allowed me to appreciate even more the need to make evidence-based decisions.

Presenting my research at international academic conferences has expanded my understanding of how different disciplines can work together to achieve a common goal. I also learned that the principles of safety culture apply across maritime security, industrial operations, and the military/civil service. Therefore, safety culture applies to all leaders at every level.

Translating Aviation Safety into Naval Leadership

As I assumed greater authority within the Philippine Navy, I began applying aviation safety principles in my role as a naval leader. The naval operational environment is similar to the aviation operational environment in that both are high-risk and carry significant consequences for improper actions. To do this properly, both environments require adherence to procedures, teamwork, and disciplined communication.

According to the Dept of National Defense (2025), modernization and professionalization will be the defense' strategic priorities. In this context, safety culture and accountability mechanisms are essential for operational effectiveness.

My aviation background has given me much of the knowledge and experience I will bring to the command of the naval units, using structured methods to mitigate risks. I also incorporate briefings, after-action reviews, and open communication on how to work towards creating these methods. The UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR, 2024) states that institutional resilience can be achieved through a learning system. I feel that the military, especially in the navy, should be a learning organization that continuously adapts and reviews in order to improve its processes.

In conclusion, military leaders should not be viewed as a rigid authority but rather as creating an environment of trust and disciplined excellence through their leadership.

International Defence Studies and Strategic Awareness

The National Defence University of Malaysia (NDUM) provided me the opportunity to see defense and strategic studies from a different perspective through an Executive Diploma program. I gained knowledge of geopolitical concerns, Indo-Pacific maritime security structures, and strategic doctrine.

The current analysis of defense, which occurs within the multidimensional security domains of Southeast Asia (Association of Southeast Asian Nations [ASEAN], 2024), illustrates that maritime territorial conflicts, cyber vulnerabilities, and humanitarian response require an integrated approach.

For my Commandant's Paper, I looked at Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR). Because the Philippines is located in a geographically vulnerable region, civil-military coordination must be very high. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (UNOCHA, 2023) identifies that the ability to respond effectively to disasters depends on interoperability between the armed forces and civilian agencies.

By having this work published in an international defense journal, I have come to understand the importance of scholarly involvement at the level of military leadership. The educational process has strengthened both my strategic foresight capabilities and my belief that the armed services should serve as military guardians of sovereignty and contribute to humanitarian stability.

Integrating Security Professionalism

In addition to aviation and defense education, I also obtained my security certification from the Philippine Society of Industrial Security (PSIS). The field of security management overlaps significantly with much of the work conducted in naval aviation and naval operations at sea. Protecting assets, conducting intelligence analysis, and effectively managing crises are all core components of ensuring a nation's resilience.

ASIS International (2024) observes that obtaining a certification credential through its organization helps build ethical standards and operational competence for those in leadership positions within the security profession. This aligns perfectly with my philosophy that integrity is the foundation for one's authority in a command role. Professionalism within the security profession is foundational to maintaining a high level of vigilance, accuracy in procedural fairness, and complements the aviation industry's commitment to safety and the defense study's approach to strategic analysis.

Interdisciplinary Leadership in Complex Environments

My professional experience has been shaped by interdisciplinary integration. According to Repko et al. (2024), interdisciplinary leadership involves bringing together multiple disciplines to address complex societal issues. Examples of modern-day security concerns include climate-related emergencies, maritime instability, and technological disruptions. It will take this type of collaboration to tackle these issues.

According to Heifetz et al. (2024), adaptive leadership theory emphasizes the need for leaders to have learning agility in unpredictable settings. My background in aviation, advanced research, intelligence, logistics, budget and finance, civil-military operations and defense education has prepared me to have this type of learning agility. I try to maintain a structure while remaining flexible, have authority when required, and listen when appropriate.

I have also found that when we integrate what we know from multiple areas, our ability to lead increases exponentially. Aviation provided me with a precision skill set, research with an analytical skill set, defense studies with a strategic skill set, and the security certification program with an ethical skill set.

Taken together, I have created a professional philosophy that brings all of these components together.

Personal Reflection on National Service

I view national service not only as a job but also as a commitment to serve my country for life. To balance my academic and operational duties required both sacrifice and perseverance; however, I believe each of these tasks has contributed to my capacity to work.

I have found that excellence is created over time. The logged flights, steaming time onboard naval ships, written research papers, and tactical analyses I have completed are all part of a larger mission to defend the Republic of the Philippines.

The changing security environment in the Indo-Pacific Region (ASEAN - 2024) serves as a reminder to our leaders that we must think beyond today and prepare ourselves to face tomorrow's challenges through continued education.

Conclusion

Bringing together my backgrounds in aviation, intelligence, logistics, plans, civil-military operations, budget and finance, safety and security, and naval leadership has been a deliberate act of transformation. By utilizing my education and experience in aviation training, graduate-level research, scholarship on safety cultures, international defense education, and security certifications, I established an interdisciplinary framework to serve my country.

I apply the principles of aviation discipline, academic inquiry, and military strategic study in my role in the Armed Forces of the Philippines, in particular the Philippine Navy - precision, transparency, adaptability, and integrity.

Inter-disciplinary excellence doesn't just happen – it's achieved intentionally. It means being curious, disciplined, and committed to life-long learning. My goal is to make a positive difference for my country by blending my experience as an aviator with academic research and military leadership through interdisciplinary collaboration in order to ensure national safety, security, stability, and resilience.

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