

Major Fred Curtis Lash, USMC (Retired)

Major Lash is currently serving as a Press Officer in the Office of Press Relations, Bureau of Public Affairs in the U.S. Department of State. His portfolio includes the Bureaus of Western Hemisphere Affairs, International Law and Narcotics, and Oceans, Environment and Science. He prepares press guidance for the Spokesman, monitors news on a variety of issues, and assists other public affairs officers with statements, releases, and briefings.

He came to the State Department after having left his position as the senior advisor in strategic communication to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Joint Communication. In his two years there, he was instrumental in preparing the long-term Strategic Communication plans for Afghanistan and the Department's overall Warrior Care Program.

In his 20-year career in the Marines, Major Lash led an infantry platoon in Vietnam, commanded reconnaissance units, and was in charge of the Presidential Security Unit at Camp David, Maryland. As head of the Joint Public Affairs Bureau in Beirut, Lebanon in April 1983, he was assigned to the 22nd MAU. He led a team in Beirut that included eight enlisted Marine photojournalists stationed at the

airport and was a frequent visitor to the American Embassy. Major Lash dispatched Marines to the U.S. Embassy immediately following the April 18, 1983 bombing. Major Lash's team was responsible for documenting the aftermath of the bombing for the Defense Department and civilian news outlets. Major Lash assisted the State Department when Secretary of State George Schultz conducted his "shuttle diplomacy" trips to Beirut, Tel Aviv, and Damascus.

After leaving Beirut in August 1983, Major Lash has continued to serve various Marine-related associations, among them—USMC Combat Correspondents Assn, Marine Corps Assn., National Marine Corps Council, plus providing advice and counsel to several Commandants. Major Lash served as an advisor to the President's Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy ("Discriminate Deterrence") and was a member of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee on Military-Media Relations (Sidle Panel) in the aftermath of press coverage problems during the Grenada invasion. In addition, he provided counsel to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs in connection with press operations in the Middle East (Desert Storm/Desert Shield).

Accredited by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), Major Lash holds a Master of Science Degree in Public Relations from American University in Washington, DC and is an adjunct faculty member at American University, instructing courses in the School of Communication. A member of the National Press Club since 1986, he received a bachelor's degree in American History from Purdue University.