



# Colonel Noah “Spool” Spataro

## Division Chief, Joint Assessment Division



Colonel Noah Spataro currently serves as the Division Chief for the Joint Assessment Division, Joint Staff J6. Recent assignments include Commanding Officer of Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1, Innovation Advisor to the Secretary of the Navy, and Unmanned Aircraft Systems Capabilities Integration Officer, Headquarters Marine Corps Capability Development and Integration.

Colonel Spataro was commissioned in 1999 with his first decade of service as an Aviation Command and Control Officer. Colonel Spataro honed his expertise across three deployed combat tours, a tour conducting remoted combat operations, and humanitarian and disaster relief operations to include service during the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. He flew 35 combat missions for 326 hours as a Senior Air Director for the Direct Air Support Center – Airborne for Operation Iraqi Freedom in early 2003. He also twice deployed for clearing operations during Operation Enduring Freedom in the Helmand Province with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit in 2008 and 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade in 2009-2010. Colonel Spataro’s most recent combat experience was in a unique remoted direct support role of Task Force Southwest, where his squadron provided over 8,000 flight hours and facilitated 281 engagements.

Colonel Spataro started in unmanned aircraft systems in 2008, helping establish the Marine Corps’ first ScanEagle services support in Afghanistan. He served in numerous joint and coalition experiences across Europe and Asia until he competitively earned a plank holder transition as an Unmanned Aircraft Systems Officer in 2012 and earned his wings from the United States Air Force Remotely Piloted Aircraft Pilot training program in 2013. After serving as both the Operations and Executive Officer at Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1, Colonel Spataro served as the Marine Corps’ Unmanned Aircraft Systems Capabilities Integration Officer at Headquarters Marine Corps, Capabilities Development and Integration. In summer 2017, he joined the Naval Innovation Advisory Council as an Innovation Advisor to the Secretary of the Navy, focusing his selective fellowship work on developing a lean startup approach to integrating emerging and disruptive technology capabilities for defense sector needs.

Colonel Spataro served as the Commanding Officer of Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1 (VMU-1). He stood up the Marine Corps’ first MQ-9A Reaper remoted combat mission in a unique direct support role of Task Force Southwest for Operation Freedom’s Sentinel and the NATO Resolute Support mission while maintaining worldwide RQ-21A Blackjack operations. Under his leadership, the VMU-1 team earned the 2019 Marine Corps Aviation Association’s Lieutenant General John I. Hudson award as Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron of the Year. Colonel Spataro’s experience spans well over a dozen unmanned aircraft systems ranging from small multi-rotors to the MQ-9A Reaper and the CQ-24 KMAX unmanned cargo helicopter.

Noah’s diverse passions include indulging in America’s beauty, sites of historical meaning, inspiring human potential, flying, disruptive technologies, autonomous systems, unique challenges, and culinary experiences. He is a graduate of the Marine Corps’ Expeditionary Warfare School, Command and Staff College, and Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course. He holds a B.S. in Biology from the University of Nebraska and an M.B.A. in Strategic Leadership from New England College. He is also a Distinguished Graduate of National Defense University’s College of Information and Cyberspace, where he earned a Master of Science in Government Information Leadership with concentrations in Influence Warfare and Data Analytics and Visualization.