



## CAREER MANAGEMENT TEAM

# QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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### MARADMIN UPDATE

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### Honoring the Fallen: Funeral Honors Duty

By: Maj C. Coston Smauley, 3d CAG

Few duties are as solemn, or as impactful, as providing funeral honors for fallen comrades. For Marines, supporting funeral honors duties (FHDs) is a deeply meaningful endeavor that supports our Marine families and our I&I counterparts while ensuring satisfactory years towards retirement with low time-commitment threshold in your community.

#### How to Sign Up and Participate

FHDs can be supported by any Marine, at any home training center (HTC) that has an assigned FHD mission. Marines are encouraged to reach out to their closest HTC and speak with the I&I 1stSgt, who is typically the FHD lead for each site. To ensure that Marines are well-trained prior to conducting their first FHD, Marines can, and should, request FHD practice points. This prepares Marines to be comfortable and confident in their abilities to perform these ceremonies with the professionalism and precision that the occasion requires. You do not have to be within the same major subordinate command to support FHDs. For example, I'm with an FHG unit and routinely support a unit within MLG that is close to my home of record (HOR). Once FHD points are requested, there is coordination between the I&I staff from the supported unit and your home unit to have those points run in Drill Manager.

#### Minimal Time Commitment with Maximum Impact

One common misconception that might deter Marines from embracing such duties is the perceived time commitment. However, the reality is that participating in FHDs often takes as little as two hours during the conduct of the ceremony, making it an accessible and manageable responsibility even amidst busy schedules. Marines can even work with their supported FHD unit to specify where they can support, ensuring that you can work close to your HOR and do not have to travel significant distances.

#### Unlimited Potential for Impact to SAT Years and Accruing Retirement Points

It is worth noting that FHD points are not restricted by the usual constraints of inactive duty points. The normal yearly point limit (130) does not apply to FHD points. There is no limit to the amount of FHD points that may be accrued, meaning that Marines may receive more than 130 points per anniversary year. This unique characteristic highlights the exceptional nature of providing funeral honors and offers Marines an opportunity to make an enduring impact that reaches far beyond routine duties. For Marines looking to accumulate points towards a satisfactory year, support families, and make a lasting impact on their communities, FHD is a great option.

# Marine Corps Reserve Policy Board Update

The Marine Corps Reserve Policy Board (MCRPB) met September 7-9 in Washington DC. The Board Chair, MajGen John Kelliher, CG 4th MAW, explained that it exists “to consider, recommend, and report to the Secretary of the Navy on reserve policy matters.”

During its most recent meeting, the Board met to discuss issues submitted by the Force, meet with the National Navy Reserve Policy Board (NNRPB), meet with Ms. Lisa Truesdale, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Military Manpower and Personnel, and to vote upon new members of the MCRPB.

The Board discussed many issues, some of which are fully within the purview of the Marine Corps to change and some that require Department of the Navy or even Joint concurrence and changes in law. Some of these more challenging policy issues that the Board is tackling include changes to the DEERS system to improve care for members found in the line of duty; advocate for legislative changes to separate contribution limits for TSP from civilian retirement plans; and address issues regarding GI Bill transfer of benefit implications for short periods of IRR time during administrative transfers. Issues that are generally easier to impact that reside solely within the Marine Corps include improving consistency and ease of ability to accrue appropriate duty points across the force as well as allowing administrative separation boards to be conducted virtually.

Some of the Board's recent successes include adapting policy to permit commanders to authorize Inactive Duty Training (IDT) telecommuting and authorizing commanders to allow the use of ATP's during travel for offsite drills. Additionally, increasing IDT travel reimbursement is a key issue that can benefit our service members, and Joint Travel Regulations changes are expected to be approved soon that will then allow the Corps to provide new guidance and increased limits for those receiving travel reimbursement for drill attendance.

“Policy changes can take a lot of time, but the board is dedicated to applying its efforts to issues that can most positively impact recruitment, retention, and readiness for the reserve component,” explained Col Jenny Storm, Chief of Staff of the MCRPB. In order to accomplish that, the Board is committed to having a diverse membership which currently boasts members of the Reserve and Active Component, as well as a wide range of ranks and experience. This diversity of perspectives helps the Board to make informed decisions on the issues that it addresses.

If you have a policy issue that you believe would improve the lives of Reserve Marines or make the force more lethal and effective, submit it to the MCRPB. The Board solicits issues annually with the most recent solicitation in March via MARADMIN 157/23. Future solicitations will be released by MARADMIN and will include instructions for the submission of issues.

In addition to submitting issues, you can also apply to be a member of the MCRPB. The Board solicits applications once per year, with the most recent solicitation this past June via MARADMIN 324/23. Interested members of the Reserve or Active component should apply.

“Though change never comes fast enough, rest assured that there are people fighting to make improvements to our Corps, as the selfless service of Marines is recognized and valued,” stated Col Storm. The MCRPB will meet again in December to continue pressing for change.

## MARFORSOUTH

Marine Forces South (MARFORSOUTH) recently completed its move from Doral, FL, to New Orleans, LA. This transition brings the MARFORSOUTH team together with Marine Forces Reserve under a dual hatted three star General, LtGen Bellon. With both commands being collocated, Reserve component capabilities provide unique opportunities to participate in a variety of training events and exercises in the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility (AOR).

MARFORSOUTH just wrapped up an immensely successful summer exercise season. Over a 45-day period, MARFORSOUTH deployed close to 1,000 Marines to the SOUTHCOM AOR, simultaneously conducting their “anchor events” – major exercises - in Peru, Ecuador, Chile, Guyana, and Colombia. This included over 300 Reserve Marines, including some from the MARFORSOUTH IMA Det. This blended force footprint, the largest any of the team can remember, highlights the utility of LtGen Bellon functioning simultaneously in his dual roles of force provider and employer. The Reserve Component capabilities he has been able to tap into have led to an increased Service presence in the competitive space of the SOUTHCOM AOR through retention-supporting activities.





# MARFORSOUTH continued

MARFORSOUTH's signature event was UNITAS 23, where they successfully demonstrated the total force MAGTF concept. The model works. The force must continue providing blended (Active/Reserve) MAGTFs as a force offering to meet Combatant Commander requirements. MAGTF-23 was comprised of personnel from CLB-8, MACG-48, and VMM-774 embarked on LPD-21 (USS New York). Despite no workup period, CLB-8 had no issues seamlessly integrating into MAGTF-23. Similarly, many of our partners, both multi-national and U.S. Navy, were unaware that reserve forces were participating. While surprising to many, this crystalizes the narrative that our nation has strategic depth in the form of our reserve force – and an ability to project it competently. Internally, we must continue using this model whenever possible to help reduce the cognitive biases between our USMC components, Active and Reserve, and entice Marines to move between them without feeling negative connotations. Once again, this team proved the efficacy of the Total Force concept as envisioned in Force Design 2030, and the MARFORRES Campaign Plan, while demonstrating the value of a MAGTF operating in the SOUTHCOM AOR.

Reserve forces have found a significant return on investment when viewed through the broader lens of reserve readiness, relevancy, and responsiveness. The MARFORRES-wide effort to prepare a MAGTF for deployment fully exercised their Title 10 responsibilities to train, man, and equip the force and provide a combined arms unit ready to support naval operations. The practical work of...

- Deploying almost 800 Active and Reserve Marines and sailors to the SOUTHCOM AOR, despite never having worked together previously
- Assembling and moving the force from over 16 different home stations across the continental U.S. via military, contracted, and commercial means (surface and air), and compositing in theater,
- Establishing an Expeditionary Advanced Base in Colombia from an Intermediate Staging Base in Honduras,
- Operating in a distributed manner from several locations in Colombia, Honduras, Texas, and afloat on two different ships,

...demonstrates a return on readiness. Simply put, synchronizing multiple warfighting functions from the total force enabled the accomplishment of key strategic SOUTHCOM objectives.

All who participate in the region have had great experiences and are an integral part of MARFORSOUTH's success to include the MARFORSOUTH IMA Marines. Here are a few quotes in their own words.

"In two years being part of the IMA, I have had the privilege to visit Brazil, Paraguay, and Peru. As a native Spanish speaker, I have been able to use my skills to contribute to my team in the AOR. The task was different each time; it ranged from supporting LtGen Bellon, and SgtMaj Ruiz, MARFORSOUTH SgtMaj, at the Marine Leaders of America Conference in Rio De Janeiro to supporting the U.S. Colombia Action Plan in Asuncion to being an interpreter for Exercise RESOLUTE SENTINEL in Lima. In each country, I made friends for life with our Marine counterparts." -SSgt Arroliga

"I was placed in the G-57 as an Exercise Planner covering down on multiple SOUTHCOM-led but Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff sponsored Joint Exercises. My role as a lead planner was to source, integrate, and develop training tracks that placed Marines into these specific exercises. To date, I've been the lead for TRADEWINDS, RESOLUTE SENTINEL, PANAMAX, CENTAM GUARDIAN, and INTEGRATED ADVANCE. In this role I have been able to travel all across the SOUTHCOM AOR, visiting multiple partner nations and working with their senior military planners. I've made lifelong friends, incredible connections with partner nation personnel across the SOUTHCOM AOR, and most importantly found happiness in a command that fits my personality and interests. I decided to apply for Director of Exercises in MARFORSOUTH (a GS-14 position), and much to my happiness was selected. So, I would say joining the IMA in MARFORSOUTH has been a blessing for me." -Maj Swearingen

Click on the images below for more information about MARFORSOUTH Events



# It's all Relative: Insights on RO/RS Markings

by: LtCol Chris Esposito, CMT

The relative value summary - reporting senior (RS) and reviewing officer (RO) marks - are often a concern for Marines who focus heavily on the numerical metrics to gauge their performance. The marks have been used to indicate where the Marine ranks "at processing" and "cumulatively" in grade and overall. There continues to be concern from Marines as to how their performance correlates to a numerical value and as to how these marks will affect the Marine for promotion, billets, command selections, professional military education (PME) and other competitive boards. The hourglass profile that Marines strive for refers to a profile in which the majority of RS marks are in the upper third (left hand side of the table) while the majority RO markings are below that of the MRO (right hand side of the table). A perfect hourglass would show a Marine with 100% of their FitReps in the upper third of their RS's profiles and 100% of other Marines reviewed by the RO as below the ranking of the MRO. Marines justifiably tend to express concern if they do not have an hourglass profile.

Based upon my experience with over 30 boards - statutory (promotion boards) and non-statutory (PME, command screen boards, etc.), the marks are important and can impact chances for selection, but the Fitness Report Section I (RS comments) and Section K (RO comments) are typically relied upon to determine if the Relative Value marks are an accurate reflection of the performance during that reporting period. The question asked is "does the audio match the visual?" In other words, board members are looking to see if the qualitative comments match the quantitative marks. Boards do a thorough job of reviewing all relevant FitRep information from the billets, billet accomplishments, length of the reporting period, RS and RO marks, and comments to determine the value of the performance. Good Section I and K comments that explain detailed, tangible accomplishments and positive recommendations can be more valuable than the RS/RO marks. There should be recommendations for promotion, retention, future billets and/or command, and PME choices, if relevant, in those remarks.

Many boards will not only review the RS and RO marks from a Marines career for selection determination but will further dissect the Fitness Reports into "critical billets" and review the performance, marks, comments and recommendations in such billets for selection determination. So, the overall Relative Value marks matter, but the determination is based on numerous other factors from the record.

A Marine should always be concerned about their performance and strive for the best accomplishments and marks possible, but if the Marine feels the marks are not reflective of their actual performance a suggestion would be to thoroughly review the Fitness Report comments and recommendations to ensure they are an accurate portrayal of performance during that reporting period. A discussion with the Reporting Senior can also assist in the clarification of past and future marks and comments.

The Career Management Team strongly recommends requesting a career counseling to use the vast experience of the counselors and mentors to provide some potential insight as to what impact overall performance and records can have on future goals or boarded selections.

## Extended Active Duty Recruiter Incentive

MARADMIN 192/23 provides opportunities for Reserve Marines to assist Marine Corps Recruiting Command by authorizing the Extended Active Duty (EAD) Recruiter incentive for Reserve Marines in the ranks Corporal through Gunnery Sergeant. The EAD recruiting incentive is a \$20,000 lump sum for a three-year obligation in the Reserve Component to include completion of the Basic Recruiter Course (BRC). At least 24 months of the 36-month obligation must be served on the EAD program. Any obligation not served in the EAD program will be served in the Selected Reserves. Marines who meet the retention guidelines and the incentive eligibility requirements established in the MARADMIN should contact a prior service recruiter or their career planner for more information.

# Director's Comments

As the Director, Reserve Affairs (RA) Division, Manpower and Reserve Affairs (M&RA), I am honored to join and be a part of the Reserve Affairs Team that continues the challenging work of supporting the Reserve Component (RC) every day. We exist to represent and advocate for the best interests of the RC at the Headquarters Marine Corps level and I am finding this work to be thoroughly rewarding among a highly talented and dedicated team of professionals who are absolutely committed to the mission.

Congratulations to Marines selected on the most recent Command Screening, Senior Leader, and RPME boards! Every one of these boards was highly competitive, with board members taking the time to diligently discuss quality applicants who took the time to apply. The incredible weight that comes with the responsibility of leading Marines and representing the Marine Corps at various PME schools was not lost on any of the board members, and most importantly, the applicants. Unfortunately not everyone was selected, but even those who did not were a part of an incredibly talented array of Marine leaders of the future that the respective boards reviewed, and should connect with the Career Management Team to walk through a wide array of options that are available.

Among the many topics covered on a weekly basis at RA, the one most focused on theme at present within M&RA is Total Force retention. This year, we saw an overhaul of the Direct Affiliation Program (DAP), which has garnered so much attention and activity that the Deputy Commandant, M&RA created a separate branch within Manpower Management (MM) Division to run the program. Additionally, RA has teamed with Marine Corps Recruiting Command to realign Career Planner and Prior Service Recruiters to ensure collocation at major bases & stations to better support transitioning Active Component Marines. Ultimately, it is RA's goal to provide as many opportunities as possible for Marines to continue participating, and I would like to think that our team is as committed to providing options for the Force as we can.

Another example includes MM Division updating their Return to Active Duty (RAD) program for Reserve Marines. Historically, the RAD board would meet twice a year whereas now anyone interested in RAD'ing can submit their package at any time- and it will route immediately. If you have questions about this program, please contact either MMOA-3 or the Career Management Team (CMT). The Prior Service Enlistment Program (PSEP) is also available for enlisted Marines that desire to return to active duty. Both programs are underutilized and are an effective way for the RC to augment the AC with quality Marines looking to return to active duty status.

The RA team is here to help! Please feel free to reach out to anyone on my team with questions you have. We are here to support you, and most importantly- are here to represent you.

Semper Fidelis,  
MajGen K. D. Pierson

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