



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE BATTALION  
MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT  
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IN REPLY REFER TO:  
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21 JUN 2021

From: Commanding Officer  
To: Marines, Sailors, and Civilians of Headquarters and Service Battalion  
Subj: INITIAL GUIDANCE AND INTENT

*"Atlas...upholds the wide heaven with unwearying head and arms ..."*  
from Odyssey 1 by Homer

1. It is my distinct honor and privilege to serve as your Commanding Officer. As a member of Atlas Battalion for the past two years, I have a cursory understanding of the daily work each member accomplishes, and I know that your quality work will continue. I look forward to visiting with each section to meet all personnel, and to understand your unit missions, requirements, successes, and challenges. To help ease the transition of command I have drafted this document which contains my initial guidance and intent.

2. **Readiness** is our guiding principle as Marines—it's the reason we exist and why our Corps remains most ready when the Nation is least ready. Our battalion plays a critical role within the entry level training pipeline to ensure our Corps meets its readiness and warfighting mandates. Our mission statement is:

*Provide technical direction, staff cognizance, installation management, and supervision of support functions for recruit training and operational control and guidance for the Western Recruiting Region (WRR) via staff primaries; provide administrative support for personnel assigned to the Battalion, Marine Corps detachments, and Depot transients; ensure good order, discipline, and readiness of all Battalion military personnel.*

The key tasks of our mission are to enable the recruitment, and recruit training of more than fifty percent of the Marine Corps' annual accessions, while maintaining our unit, personnel/individual, and family readiness. We therefore must enable the training of recruits and prepare ourselves like every day is the day before we get the call. The accomplishment of these tasks places a premium on having a clear focus and sense of urgency across the battalion.

3. Performing our mission and ensuring our readiness requires **Unity of Effort**. Communicating a coherent and positive message helps build unity of effort. This guidance should result in thought and action on your part—carry this message to your subordinates, shape your guidance to support it, and build your teams with this intent in mind.

4. There are many components of readiness. Our framework for Readiness has three main parts: **People, Training, and Equipment**. All are equally important, and our goal is to strive for excellence in all three areas.

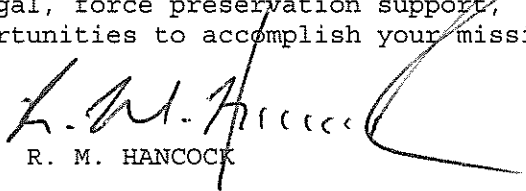
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- People: physical, mental, moral, administrative, family, and command climate.
- Training: Marine Corps standards-based, realistic, and progressive in developing MOS/PME mastery by rank/grade.
- Equipment: facilities, maintenance, accountability, regular command assessments and reporting.

5. **Team Building** is fundamental to Readiness; it's what we do as leaders. The standards and success of your team is a direct reflection of your leadership. As you build your teams, the following guidance applies:

- Instill a sense of individual responsibility for maintaining standards and accomplishing the mission.
- Know the details concerning your Marines, Sailors, and civilians: their family situations, living conditions on or off base, and their personal ambitions. This is not only your business, it is your responsibility.
- Family Readiness is the continued effort to provide information, resources, and assistance to those in need. We will never pass on an opportunity to provide immediate support to our families.
  - Our spouses and children are vital to the success of our command. Every effort must be made to balance mission with home life.
  - Our command is the extended family of our single Marines. As such, we strive to provide an environment of support much like that of their primary family back home.
- Counseling: We have guidance--MCO 1500.61--I expect that we are following it.
- Standards: There is a Marine Corps standard for everything. I don't have any others, nor should you.
- Emphasize the Marine Corps Leadership Traits and Principles as our fundamental building blocks of individual responsibility. I want to see tangible evidence that you are teaching and promoting these.
- Command climate: Lead in a manner that ensures Marines, Sailors, and civilians are treated with dignity and respect and trust their leaders to do it right. This requires constant engagement and assessment by leaders.
- Mistakes are expected. Be aggressive, make new mistakes, and learn. Your goal should be to not make the same mistake twice, not to be cautious and avoid them.
- Great teams value honesty, trust, timeliness, balance, calm and competent leaders, and teamwork--there is no place for self-promotion or one-upmanship.
- This is a team sport. Don't hesitate to ask for help.

6. The battalion headquarters exists to support you, your units, and your Marines, Sailors, and Marine Corps civilians. It is my duty to ensure you are provided with the administrative, legal, force preservation support, equipment, facilities, and training opportunities to accomplish your mission.

  
R. M. HANCOCK