



**UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS**  
TRAINING AND EDUCATION COMMAND  
1019 ELLIOT ROAD  
QUANTICO, VIRGINIA 22134

TECOMO 1650.1C  
C 46  
22 Jan 21

TRAINING AND EDUCATION COMMAND ORDER 1650.1C

From: Commanding General  
To: Distribution List

Subj: MILITARY AWARDS PROGRAM

Ref: (a) SECNAVINST 1650.1J  
(b) SECNAV M-1650.1  
(c) MCO 1650.19J W/CH 1  
(d) MARADMIN 065/20

Encl: (1) TECOM Awarding Authorities  
(2) Award Citation Mandatory Opening and Closing Sentences  
(3) iAPS User Permissions  
(4) Sample Expedite Letter  
(5) Sample Letter of Continuity

1. Situation. The purpose of military awards and decorations are to publicly recognize and reward heroism and other exceptional acts that distinguish an individual or unit among those performing similar acts or services.

2. Cancellation. TECOMO 1650.1B.

3. Mission. To publish this Awards Order for Training and Education Command (TECOM) as a means to inform and instruct TECOM Headquarters (HQ) and its major subordinate commands (MSCs) / major subordinate element (MSEs) of administrative procedures and regulations for the submission of personal awards in order to streamline the approval process and ensure timely presentation.

4. Execution

a. Commander's Intent and Concept of Operations

(1) Commander's Intent. The Commanding General (CG), TECOM, encourages the submission of award recommendations while preserving the character, prestige, and meaning of personal awards.

(2) Concept of Operations. Award originators will use the Headquarters Marine Corps (HQMC) Improved Award Processing System (iAPS) website, <https://www.manpower.usmc.mil/iaps>, to submit personal award recommendations (NAVMC 11533) with a Summary of Action (SOA) and proposed citation. For awards on all Marines and Sailors, the originator must be a commissioned officer or General Schedule (GS) employee senior in grade to the recommended awardee. Prior to submitting all awards to their respective awarding authority, they must be endorsed through the applicable chain of command.

(a) Permissions

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A: Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

1. The TECOM Adjutant, Staff Secretary Chief, and Adjutant Chief will serve as Trusted Assistants (TA) for CG, TECOM and are authorized to sign award recommendations for endorsement or final disposition in iAPS on the CG's behalf. The Adjutant serves as the Unit Awards Administrator (UAA) for TECOM HQ. UAAs will process all requests for iAPS permissions for all other iAPS users within this HQ to include: Endorsers, Reviewers, Board Members, and civilians authorized to originate, endorse, or review awards.

2. All commissioned officers will automatically receive originator permissions upon registering in iAPS but must request additional permissions, e.g., endorser, preparer, board member, reviewer, through the UAA.

3. When requesting additional permissions beyond originator, users must access the website found in paragraph 4.a(2) of this Order and select the tab at the top of the screen labeled my permissions. Once selected, the requestor must check the desired permission(s) and provide justification in the justification block. The description of iAPS user permissions can be found in enclosure (3).

(b) Timetable for Awards Submission

1. Timeliness, accuracy, conciseness, and factual justification are principal in all award recommendations. Per references (a) and (b), award recommendations must reach the UAA according to the following presentation timelines:

<u>AWARD</u>	<u>DAYS BEFORE PRESENTATION</u>
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL OR HIGHER	150
LEGION OF MERIT (TRANSFER)	120
LEGION OF MERIT (RETIREMENT ONLY)	90

2. Awards submitted outside of published timelines will be considered late and will require justification via an expedite letter signed by the MSC CG or MSE CO prior to processing. By direction is not authorized, only acting. Enclosure (4) provides an example expedite letter. Justification for late awards will include a detailed processing timeline along with specific comments from the originator.

(c) TECOM Awards Board. The TECOM Adjutant maintains the TECOM awards board. All awards boards at TECOM HQ will be conducted electronically through iAPS, to include voting and comments by board members. The purpose of the awards board is to recommend approval, disapproval, upgrade, or downgrade of an award submission. The awards board ensures the equitable application of standards for awards and is advisory in nature. A specific recommendation is required, regardless of vote (approve as written, downgrade, upgrade, no award etc.) CG, TECOM relies on the board's advice and recommendation regarding quality, both on the profundity and merit. Board members recommendations and comments will not be shared with anyone other than the CG, Chief of Staff, and Sergeant Major.

1. Board composition and execution

a. The board members will not be junior to the recommended awardee.

b. The board members will not vote on awards originating from their respective section / division.

c. All awards boards will have a minimum of two voting members.

2. The Adjutant will convene awards boards as required to ensure board members have five working days to review and take action on submissions, with the exception of those awards earned via other applicable programs (e.g., Commandant's Combined Awards Program, awards for recognition that a board has already been conducted).

3. Board members will review and discuss each award in its entirety using iAPS. Upon consideration of each award, board members will vote either concur or non-concur. If majority of votes is "concur," it will be recommended for approval; however, the final approval authority rests with the awarding authority. Once the voting is complete, the Adjutant will consolidate the member votes for the CG's consideration.

(d) SOA. The SOA is limited to two pages, with the exception of SOAs for valor or non-combat heroism, which may require additional space to accurately describe the awardee's actions in detail and to include all the mandatory circumstantial information required by reference (b). The SOA must focus on the specifics of the award nominee's actions, provide comparable data, and synthesize the key facts from witness statements (if required), official reports, and other official evidence. The SOA must present an objective summary, citing specific accomplishments, and their impact on the command's mission. The amount of detail and supporting documentation required depends upon the circumstances and the nature of the award being recommended.

1. Awards for Valor. Valor award recommendations must be entered into official channels within 45 days of the act justifying the award and acted upon within 10 days of receipt by each echelon in the review process to the awarding authority. For this purpose, entered into official channels means endorsed by the first O-5 commander in the chain of command. This is the first level of command which personnel dedicated to processing awards, and the echelon where most verification of accuracy and completeness occurs. Valor awards include: Medal of Honor, Navy Cross, Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross w/V, Bronze Star w/V, Air Medal w/V, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal w/V, and the Navy and Marine Corps Medal.

2. Awards Presented at the End of Tour. End of tour award recognition should not be routine or automatic. Justification for award recommendation should be based on exceptional nature of service and not based on the individual's reassignment, transfer, or retirement. The ending date for the action periods of an end of tour award should be the same as the estimated date of presentation submitted by the originating organization.

3. Awards Presented for Specific Achievement (Impact). A specific achievement (impact) award may be authorized for exceptional performance over a period of short duration, which, for the purpose of this Order, is defined as a period not to exceed 12 months.

4. Awards Presented at the Time of Retirement. If an individual is recommended for an award upon retirement or transfer to the Fleet Reserve, Fleet Marine Corps Reserve, or Individual Ready Reserve, the SOA

should only reflect service at the last duty station and should only include service that has not previously been recognized. For retirement awards, the retirement sentence outlined in enclosure (2) is required as standard verbiage for the second to last sentence. Do not incorporate any terminal leave days within the dates covered in a retirement award submission. The end date for retirement awards should be the last day the intended recipient is present for duty at their respective command.

(e) Citation. The proposed award citation should highlight all aspects of the individual's performance that are of the utmost significance. Submit proposed citations following the format outlined in enclosure (2), paying particular attention to mandatory opening and closing sentences. The proposed citation must be unclassified and contain no acronyms or abbreviations. All citations will be written in third person.

(f) Meritorious Mast. Whenever the performance of an enlisted Marine is considered noteworthy, commendable, or the Marine demonstrates exceptional industry, judgment, or initiative, the senior person who has observed the Marine's performance shall make a report of it to the Marine's commander (battalion or equivalent echelon). These reports shall be carefully considered and, if appropriate, a meritorious mast will be awarded.

(g) Certificate of Commendation. Certificates of Commendation may be issued by all general officers as well as officers who have authority to approve the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal. All other officers desiring to make a recommendation shall submit a letter of recommendation to a general officer or commander with the appropriate approving authority. The proposed citation, written in third person, will be double-spaced on plain bond paper and must not exceed nine (9) horizontal lines of text.

(h) Letter of Continuity. A letter of continuity communicates the accomplishments of a Marine from one nomination authority to another that may result in the nomination for an award. The Marine that may be awarded should not be aware of the letter of continuity, and a letter of continuity does not necessitate the creation of an award.

1. In general, a letter of continuity may be submitted when an officer, typically the officer in charge, is reassigned within the command / organization or departs the command / organization, or when the Marine is reassigned within the command / organization.

2. The letter of continuity will be prepared in letter format with a proposed SOA enclosed, citation, and forwarded under separate cover to the individual's new reporting senior. Enclosure (5) is a sample letter of continuity.

(i) Awards for Immediate Staff. Nominations for the Meritorious Service Medal and above for members of a Flag / General Officer's immediate staff (e.g., Chief of Staff, Sergeant Major, Aide, or Staff Secretary) shall be forwarded to the next higher awarding authority for appropriate action.

(j) Reconsideration of an Award Previously Disapproved or Downgraded. Recommendations for awards previously considered by awarding authority may be reconsidered only upon the presentation of new and relevant material that was not available at the time the original recommendation was considered.

b. Subordinate Element Missions

(1) Adjutant, TECOM

(a) Maintain the command's military awards program per this Order and governing reference.

(b) Provide guidance on the mechanics of iAPS and the execution of the awards board process.

(b) Develop internal controls to identify all personnel incoming and detaching from the command.

(c) Review and board all awards nominations in a timely manner.

(d) Serve as the UAA for TECOM HQ.

(2) CGs, MSCs / COs, MSEs. TECOM MSCs / MSEs will establish a Military Awards Program to ensure proper submission of all military awards for deserving personnel within their respective commands and at a minimum ensure the following:

(a) Adhere to the submission timelines outlined in paragraph 4.a(2) (b) and provide detailed justification when said timelines cannot be met.

(b) Develop internal controls to identify all personnel detaching from the command. For all awards requiring action by CG, TECOM, utilize Unit Identification Code M30010 for forwarding in iAPS.

(c) Ensure all awards are submitted in compliance with this Order and the references therein.

(d) Ensure all awards have been reviewed by the designated MSC award administrator prior to submission to TECOM HQ for processing.

c. Coordinating Instructions

(1) Approval Authority. Approval authorities are outlined in enclosure (1).

(a) Commands and organizations will forward endorsed award recommendations through the chain of command to the Adjutant via iAPS. Award submissions that will be endorsed or approved by CG, TECOM must be endorsed by the MSC CG and MSE CO, as applicable.

(b) CG, TECOM is the approval authority for retirement Legions of Merit and retains the authority to approve all awards retirement Legions of Merit or below, for personnel assigned to TECOM HQ at his discretion, with the exception of his immediate staff.

(c) The Secretary of the Navy is the approval authority for all Department of Navy awards for foreign personnel, regardless of the level of award.

(d) Commanders in the chain of command may recommend no award or a lower award than that originally recommended, however commanders in the chain of command may not stop an award or return it to the originator simply because they do not agree that an individual is not deserving of an award. The submission must be forwarded to the awarding authority as the award was originally recommended for final disposition.

(2) The Adjutant does not write awards or relieve originators and endorsers of the responsibilities contained within this Order to submit a relevant, accurate, and administratively sound award recommendation. The Adjutant has the authority to return all award recommendations to originators if they do not meet required elements set forth in the references and guidance provided within this Order.

5. Administration and Logistics. Recommendations for changes to this Order will be submitted to the TECOM Adjutant.

6. Command and Signal

a. Command. This Order is applicable to TECOM HQ and its MSCs.

b. Signal. This Order is effective the date signed.



LEWIS A. CRAPAROTTA

DISTRIBUTION: A

TECOM AWARDING AUTHORITIES

AWARDING AUTHORITY	LM (TRANSFER) AND HIGHER	LM (RETIREMENT)	MSM	NAVCOM	NAM	MOVSM	CERTCOMM AND BELOW
CMC (MMA)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
CG TECOM		X	X	X	X	X	X
CG TRNGCMD			X	X	X	X	X
CG EDCOM			X	X	X	X	X
CG MCRDPI			X	X	X	X	X
CG MCRDSD			X	X	X	X	X
CG MAGTFTC			X	X	X	X	X
O-6 Command Slated Commanders				X	X	X	X
O-5 Battalion Commanders and other equivalent command positions					X	X	X

\*\*Note: Awards for Members of a Flag or General Officer's Immediate Personal Staff.  
Award recommendations for immediate staff (e.g., Chief of Staff, Sergeant Major, Aide, or Staff Secretary) shall be forwarded to the next higher awarding authority in the chain of command for appropriate action.

AWARD CITATION FORMATTING AND MANDATORY OPENING AND CLOSING SENTENCES

**LEGION OF MERIT**

1. Maximum Lines: 23
2. Capitalization: Natural
3. Font: Courier New
4. Font Size: 12 pitch
5. Layout: Portrait
6. Max Characters: 1650
7. Opening Line:

**"For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service as (billet title), (staff section / division), (unit) from (month and year) to (month and year)."**

8. For retirement, insert the following statement above the closing line:

**"(Rank and Names)'s superior performance of duties culminated (his / her) (insert total years of service) years of honorable and dedicated military service."**

9. Closing Line:

**"(Rank and Name)'s (trait), (trait), and (adjective) dedication to duty reflected great credit on (him / her) and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service."**

**MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL**

1. Maximum Lines: 23
2. Capitalization: Natural
3. Font: Courier New
4. Font Size: 12 pitch
5. Layout: Portrait
6. Max Characters: 1650
7. Opening Lines:

**"For outstanding meritorious service as (billet title), (staff section / division), (unit) from (month and year) to (month and year)."**



8. For retirement, insert the following statement above the closing line:

**"(Rank and Names)'s superior performance of duties culminated (his / her) (insert total years of service) years of honorable and dedicated military service."**

9. Closing Line:

**"(Rank and Name)'s (trait), (trait), and (adjective) dedication to duty reflected great credit on (him / her) and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service."**

**NAVY AND MARINE CORPS COMMENDATION MEDAL**

1. Maximum Lines: 8
2. Capitalization: All Capital Letters
3. Font: Times New Roman
4. Font Size: 10 pitch
5. Layout: Landscape
6. Opening Lines:

**"MERITORIOUS SERVICE WHILE SERVING AS (BILLET TITLE), (STAFF SECTION / DIVISION), (UNIT) FROM (MONTH AND YEAR) TO (MONTH AND YEAR)."**

7. Closing Line:

**"(RANK AND NAME)'S (TRAIT), (TRAIT), AND (ADJECTIVE) DEDICATION TO DUTY REFLECTED CREDIT ON (HIM / HER) AND WERE IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MARINE CORPS AND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICE."**

**NAVY AND MARINE CORPS ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL**

1. Maximum Lines: 8
2. Capitalization: All Capital Letters
3. Font: Times New Roman
4. Font Size: 10 pitch
5. Layout: Landscape
6. Opening Lines:

**"PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT IN THE SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE OF (HIS / HER) DUTIES WHILE SERVING AS (BILLET TITLE), (STAFF SECTION / DIVISION), (UNIT) FROM (MONTH AND YEAR) TO (MONTH AND YEAR)."**

7. Closing Line:

**"(RANK AND NAME)'S (TRAIT), (TRAIT), AND (ADJECTIVE) DEDICATION TO DUTY REFLECTED CREDIT ON (HIM / HER) AND WERE IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MARINE CORPS AND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICE."**

**CERTIFICATE OF COMMENDATION**

1. Maximum Lines: 8
2. Capitalization: All Capital Letters
3. Layout: Landscape
4. Opening Lines:

**"PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AND OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE OF DUTY WHILE SERVING AS (BILLET TITLE), (STAFF SECTION / DIVISION), (UNIT), FROM (MONTH AND YEAR) TO (MONTH AND YEAR)."**

5. Closing Line:

**"(RANK AND NAME)'S (TRAIT), (TRAIT), AND (ADJECTIVE) DEDICATION TO DUTY REFLECTED CREDIT ON HIM AND WERE IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MARINE CORPS AND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICE."**

**MERITORIOUS MAST**

1. Maximum Lines: 14
2. Capitalization: All Capital Letters, Bold, Full Justified
3. Layout: Portrait
4. Opening Line:

**"DURING THE PERIOD OF (MONTH AND YEAR) THROUGH (MONTH AND YEAR), (GRADE AND NAME) PERFORMED (HIS / HER) DEMANDING DUTIES IN AN OUTSTANDING MANNER WHILE SERVING AS (BILLET), (STAFF SECTION/DIVISION), (UNIT)."**

iAPS USER PERMISSIONS

Preparer. This role is reserved for civilian and enlisted personnel acting in an administrative capacity only. Can only create draft awards and forward them to associated originators.

Originator. This role is reserved for Commissioned Officers or any designated Civilian supervisors who are Reporting Seniors for fitness reporting may be authorized to originate awards.

Reviewer. User(s) that are NOT in the official chain of command, but may still have input on an award recommendation. This role is typically reserved for personnel acting in an administrative capacity directed as the directorate point of contact for the military awards in their respective directorates.

Endorser. User(s) that are in the official chain of command of an award and must officially "endorse" an award recommendation (Company Commander, Battalion Commander, etc...). This permission will be granted to Division Directors or Deputy Directors in the absence of the Director. This role acts as the final directorate processing action. Once endorsed, the recommendation will be forwarded to the Unit Awards Administrator.

Trusted Assistant. For General Officer's only (share the General's endorsing permissions). This role is only granted to personnel directly identified in writing by the Commanding General.



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
UNIT LETTERHEAD

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
1650  
C 46

From: Commanding General/Division Director/Section, Unit  
To: Commanding General, Training and Education Command

Subj: REQUEST TO EXPEDITE AWARD IN CASE OF RANK FIRST LAST  
EDIPI/PMOS USMC

Ref: (a) SECNAVINST 1650.1H  
(b) MCO 1650.19J  
(c) TECOMO 1650.1

1. Per the references, I request expedited award processing for the subject named award.
2. The reason for this award's tardiness is due to: Provide justification here.
3. The following information is provided:
  - a. Award occasion: (impact/retirement/transfer)
  - b. Award origination date: DD MMM YY.
  - c. The presentation date is scheduled for DD MMM YY.
4. The point of contact in this matter is Sergeant Major John A. Lejeune at john.a.lejeune@usmc.mil or (703) 123-4567.

I. M. COMMANDING

Enclosure (4)

LETTER OF CONTINUITY

1650  
Office Code  
Date

From: Commanding Officer/Division Head/OIC/etc.  
To: Whom It May Concern

Encl: (1) Proposed Summary of action  
(2) Proposed Citation

Subj: LETTER OF CONTINUITY FOR RANK FIRST LAST EDIPI/PMOS USMC

1. From July 2011 to December 2013, Sergeant Marine served as the Administrative Noncommissioned Officer In Charge, Adjutant Section, Training and Education Command. During this time, I served as Sergeant Marine's section head and direct supervisor, in which I was thoroughly impressed with his performance and conduct both on and off duty. Sergeant Marine made a significant contribution to our section by improving discipline, attention to detail, and the work performance of our Marines. His/her accomplishments during this period go beyond what can be accomplished in a fitness report. Enclosures (1) and (2) contain a proposed summary of action and citation that summarize Sergeant Marine's actions and how those actions affected the unit's missions during this period. This report is intended to summarize these accomplishments for future recognition.

2. Point of contact regarding this letter is Major I. M. Commanding at (000) 000-0000 or via email at I.M.Commanding@usmc.mil.

I. M. COMMANDING