



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
MARINE AIR GROUND TASK FORCE TRAINING COMMAND
MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER
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5351
MTD 1

JUL 13 2018

POLICY LETTER 17-18

From: Commanding General
To: All Hands

Subj: COMBAT AND OPERATIONAL STRESS CONTROL

Ref: (a) MCO 5351.1
(b) CG TECOM Policy Letter 1-15 of 21 Sep 15

1. Situation. Per the references, this Policy Letter provides policy and guidance for Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command (MAGTFTC), Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC), subordinate commanders to establish a Combat and Operational Stress Control (COSC) program. The Marine Corps develops totally fit leaders resilient in body, mind, spirit, and social areas of life; enabling them to assume progressively greater responsibilities. Stress is the process by which we respond to mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional challenges, and as a daily part of Marine Corps life, is used to build strength. Understanding stress reactions, and proactively addressing stressors, increases mission readiness, preserves the force, and promotes the long-term health of our Marines and Sailors. All Marines and Sailors must find ways to address it for themselves, their subordinates, their family, and their unit, in order to promote psychological resilience.

2. Mission. We must have the ability to train and sustain a combat ready, resilient force capable of accomplishing all assigned missions. All subordinate commands of MAGTFTC, MCAGCC shall facilitate a cohesive, ready force and promote long-term health and well-being among Marines, Sailors, and their family members. This program shall assist in maintaining warfighting capabilities by identifying, preventing, and managing the impacts of combat and operational stress on Marines and Sailors.

3. Execution. The COSC five Core Leader Functions promote principles of wellness, prevention, early intervention, identification, reintegration, and stigma reduction. The following Five Core Leader Functions will form the foundation for this command's COSC program.

a. Strengthen. Leaders will use their existing tools for training and developing Marines to mentally, physically, spiritually, and socially strengthen their ability to fight the negative effects of combat or operational stress. This includes tough training already being conducted to develop technical proficiency and increase unit cohesion. Families must be included when developing unit cohesion, and will be offered participation in COSC events in order to strengthen their ability to deal with the stressors of military life. Additionally, leaders can also build strength through their own conduct and example, by setting high standards, demanding excellence, and giving clear information and guidance.

b. Mitigate. Many stressors can be mitigated through proper planning. This gives Marines and Sailors a greater reserve to address those stressors that cannot be avoided. Leaders should be aware of the effects of stress on each Marine and Sailor, and help them develop their own coping strategies, in order to empower decision making, effective planning, and resilience. Strong coping strategies will help Marines and Sailors prepare for, and overcome, future stressors.

POLICY LETTER 17-18

c. Identify. Promptly identifying and addressing signs of stress in their Marines and Sailors is a critical requirement for all leaders. Knowing and using the Stress Continuum and Stress Decision Flowchart is an important aspect of good small unit leadership and mastering combat skills.

d. Treat. Treatment is about taking action. It begins with self-care and peer support, and may range from addressing personal issues and sharing lessons learned, to referring the Marine or Sailor for medical intervention. Leaders must remain involved in the Marine or Sailor's ongoing requirements throughout the treatment cycle. This includes closely monitoring those transitioning out of the military, as well.

e. Reintegrate. Regardless of the level of treatment, each Marine or Sailor will be assisted during the treatment process and received back into the unit once recovered. This may require further mentorship and understanding of limitations imposed by their recovery. The expectation is that Marines and Sailors suffering from stress issues can, and will, continue to be effective members of their unit, and I expect all commanders and leaders to set up these Marines and Sailors for the greatest chance of success.

4. Administration and Logistics

a. For MAGTF/TC, MCAGCC subordinate units, commanders will implement the spirit and intent of the references, as appropriate, to the mission and organization of their units.

b. A copy of this policy will be prominently displayed on command information boards.

c. The phone numbers for COSC services are:

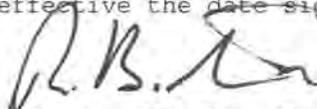
(1) Marine Corps Family Team Building (760) 830-3110

(2) Behavioral Health (760) 830-8283

5. Command and Signal

a. Command. This policy letter is applicable to MAGTF/TC, MCAGCC subordinate commands and will remain in effect until otherwise directed by higher headquarters or the undersigned.

b. Signal. This policy letter is effective the date signed.


R. B. TURNER, JR.

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