



SERGEANT MAJOR OF THE MARINE CORPS

MEMORANDUM



20 December 2010

SMMC MEMO 04-10

1. Recruiting: As usual, Recruiters are accomplishing the mission and keeping our ranks full. Marine Corps Recruiting Command made mission in November for both shipping and contracting. They made both before Thanksgiving, which gave them a well-deserved break for the Holiday - something that is typically not the norm in the recruiting world.

MCRC is off to a strong start for December, and will meet both goals again so they can enjoy the Christmas/New Year Holiday with family and friends. Congratulations to MCRC, and thanks to all the recruiters who ensure our Corps' future is in good hands.

2. Marines/Sailors in Combat: Marines and Sailors in Afghanistan are living up to our great warfighting legacy, taking the fight to the enemy every day. To boost the combat power in Afghanistan, tanks are now on the ground. The Commandant's priority is to ensure Marines have every asset available to crush the enemy.

In addition to combat operations, Marines are also training Afghan National Army soldiers in everything from first aid to small-unit leadership. The ANA soldiers are also patrolling and taking part in combat operations with Marines, leaving no doubt that they are dedicated to ridding their country of the enemy.

3. Garrison Leadership: As we all know, the Holiday season can be a difficult time for some Marines/Sailors. Whether it's the first Holiday away from home, or operational tempo or distance won't allow for leave, it can be a difficult time filled with loneliness, and possibly depression. Pay attention to those you lead, and make sure they have a safe and happy Holiday Season.

4. Holiday Safety Video: The Commandant and I recently recorded a Holiday Safety Video to stress the importance of being safe over this Holiday season. The Safety Division at HQMC did a great job of putting this together, implementing a scenario Marines could relate to.

Last year during the Holiday season - Thanksgiving to New Years - we lost eight Marines, and most of those were a result of alcohol use or fatigue while driving. Losing even one Marine is one too many, and these were senseless deaths that could have been avoided.

Incorporate this video into your Holiday safety briefs and discuss it with your Marines and Sailors. Also take the time to sit your Marines and Sailors down and ask each and every one of them what their plans are for the Holidays. As I've said before, nothing works better when leading Marines than being eye-to-eye with them. Even as the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, I get a Holiday safety brief from a Marine Safety NCO, and everyone in the office shares what their plans are.

Taking the time to discuss safety issues could result in saving a life. Ensure every Marine and Sailor has all the knowledge they need to make a smart and informed decision when it comes to safety this Holiday season.

5. Happy Holidays: The Commandant, Mrs. Amos, Liz, and I would like to wish all Marines, Sailors, and their families a safe and happy Holiday season. You all sacrifice so much, and we appreciate everything you do for our Nation, our Corps, and our Marine families.

For those fortunate enough to be at home this Holiday season, we hope you get a chance to spend some quality time with family and friends. As you celebrate, please keep our Marines, Sailors, and fellow service members who are in harm's way in your thoughts and prayers. For those who are forward deployed or are serving overseas, we hope you can find time to gather with your Marine Corps family to celebrate the season.

As we prepare to start the New Year, we know you will continue to carry on the Corps' great warfighting legacy. Safe travels, and God Bless!

Semper Fidelis,



CARLTON W. KENT

16th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps