



12TH MARINE REGIMENT 3D MARINE DIVISION



Commanding Officer's **Combat Operational Stress Control Policy Statement**

The Marines and Sailors of 12th Marine Regiment are part of a proud legacy. Iwo Jima, Vietnam, and today our Regiment has responded to the nation's call at a moment's notice and successfully faced the adversity of combat, humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief. For our regiment to remain successful within the range of military options we must remain ready.

Ultimately, the responsibility of preparedness rests with the individual Marine and Sailor both personally and for their family. If we are to remain ready we must be resilient and have the tools to succeed in adverse conditions. Stress is an adverse condition that will strike all of us at some point in garrison, at home, in the field and in combat.

The Marine Corp Combat Operational Stress Control (COSC) program is a prevention effort focused on this end state; to instill Marines with skills, knowledge, attitudes and tools to understand stress, its impacts, and when and how to take action. The COSC program helps us to sustain a combat ready and resilient force capable of any mission.

Stress is a natural part of life and manifests in each of us in different ways for different reasons. Experiences from combat deployments are not the sole cause of stress as the program name implies. Operational stress can result from any number of factors, and certainly our sustained high operational tempo creates a measure of stress on each of us. Stress alone is not a bad thing. COSC recognizes a stress continuum and our response to it... ranging from fit and ready (green) to ill (red). Unhealthy levels of stress or unhealthy coping mechanisms can lead to stress related injuries or illness; moving us from fit and ready to distressed and depressed.

Leaders, I expect you to know your resources. Within the command there are numerous resources available to assist Marines, Sailors, and family members. Embedded individuals like the Marine and Family Life Counselor (MFLC), Chaplain, Behavioral Health Prevention Specialist, Family Readiness Officer, and the Operational Stress Control and Readiness (OSCAR) team members are all here to provide services and training focused on building and sustaining totally fit Marines and Sailors. We also have medical and mental health providers that can assist when a higher specialized level of care is needed. All of these resources lead to unit and individual resiliency.

Prevention is key. It is common to identify stressors after an incident, but we must strive to identify signs or symptoms within our people, command, or culture prior to a compromising situation. Know the signs of stress and step up for your fellow patriots when you recognize those signs, then help those Marines and Sailors connect to the right resources.

Semper Fidelis and Be Ready to Fight and Win Tonight!

Michael Roach
Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps