



13 Jul 18

Subj: INITIAL TRAINING GUIDANCE

Ref: (1) MCO 1553.3B Unit Training Management (UTM) Program  
(2) NAVMC 3500.44C Infantry Training and Readiness (T&R) Manual  
(3) 3dMarDiv UDP SOP

1. **Training** is defined as everything this battalion does that contributes toward developing, maintaining and increasing our combat readiness. The objective for training is to achieve the highest possible level of combat readiness and tactical excellence across the battalion.

*Everything is training, and training is everything.*

2. **Training Foundations:** In order to fight & win whenever and wherever employed, we must become experts in our ability to **SHOOT – MOVE – COMMUNICATE – EVACUATE** - and **Employ Effective COMBINED ARMS** across the physical, mental and moral domains. Our rifle squads that close with to destroy the enemy are the Main Effort in this battalion. Everything we do is designed to get these Marines to a decisive position of advantage relative to the enemy. Our squads will win the last one hundred yards—and no one will ever be able to beat them. Squad Leader is the most important leadership position in this battalion. Expert knowledge of weapons and equipment, mastery of field craft, a bias for aggressive action are enduring requirements; never divert focus from the enemy; Realistic Risk -vs- Gain in all we do; Thoughtful ORM -- Signed; Supervision, and a 'Guardian Angel' mindset to eradicate the scourge of "The 5 Phenomena of Negligence" (AKA IPB of an Accident).

Our focus is the infantry basics:

- Offense: fire and movement (Suppress, Assess, Move, Kill -- SAM-K)
- Defense (coordinated, systematic, depth, and integrated)
- Scouting & Patrolling (observation, camouflage, stealth)

3. **Training Basics:**

**\*\*\*Shoot- Marksmanship:** Always wear your issued combat gear and utilize day/night optics; Ensure IMMEDIATE TARGET feedback on every round fired; All firing will be associated with a standard of performance (% of hits vs rounds fired, distribution of fire/fire commands/targets/fire control/ rounds); All tasks conducted under increasingly realistic conditions both day and night, under physical duress, with increasing realism; Targetry replicates battlefield conditions such as array & exposure (targets matched to terrain, exposure, visibility). **MOVERS** when possible. Moving targets are harder to hit, and most of our targets are humans who move; Focus on **FIRE & MOVEMENT** with weapons integration (grenades, rockets, CSW, task stacking). Best achieved via **LANE TRAINING**. Use ISMT, TDK, and all simulators to increase the number of repetitions and feedback.

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**\*\*\*Move-**

Attack & Defend: Goal is to conduct high-kinetic live fire attacks & then seamlessly transition into a deliberate, combined arms DEFENSE. (This is hard).

Patrolling: The essence of SUL actions, initiative & Physical/Moral/ Mental endurance.

Battle Drills: integrated, focused, decisive actions — Simple, Security, Repetition, Speed, Surprise, Common Sense of Purpose -- Marines must understand the "why and what" of each drill to assure adaptability WRT terrain and friendly/enemy dispositions.

Night Fighting: Not just another environment (desert, jungle, mountain, CBRN, cold weather, etc). The night must become our definitive advantage in "every clime & place" where we can shoot, move, communicate, evacuate, and employ effective combined arms aggressively and in a manner that puts our opponent on his knees. Effective night fighting is much more than leveraging our superior kit & technology. It's a mindset. Exploit night training at every opportunity to develop our capabilities and sharpen our senses -- >50% training at night.

Combat Driving: Starts with licensing surge & add increasingly realistic battlefield conditions; develop speed in execution of drills and recovery operations in various conditions – slow is smooth, smooth is fast.

Combat Conditioning: A continuing action. Task stacking – done anywhere, anytime. Best when incorporated with decision making & fine motor skill tasks. Hike often. This separates the sheep from the sheepdogs. We will crush our fighting spirit and embarrass ourselves if we are not mentally and physically hardened in the way only challenging hikes can nurture.

**\*\*\*Communicate-** Efficient & Interpersonal Communications; Information Distortion is ENEMY #1; Must master technical aspects of all communications equipment and incorporate our communications platoon to help refine our TTPs and cross-train to build depth; Master reports & reporting; CPX plan must be robust and we must maintain the will to contribute to this vital training -- ALL the time. Leaders- "ACTUALS" MUST communicate on the net up, down and across to limit unnecessary chatter. "Push to talk" = an opportunity to be effectively targeted by our enemy — we must enforce discipline on our nets, develop efficiencies to ensure brevity, respect the real risks and vulnerabilities of our C2 networks, and be prepared to operate in denied and degraded C4I environments (AKA C2D2E).

**\*\*\*Evacuate-** Continue the mission, care for the wounded, honor the dead -- seamless & focused. Moral & mental enabler for all when they know that they will be cared for properly. 1x CLS/TCCC per fire team minimum. Combat conditioning, CASEVAC security, and CASEVAC procedures must become second nature. This is a great continuing action drill when friction arises on ranges and you must develop on the spot training opportunities to make proper use of the Marines time.

**\*\*\*Employ Effective Combined Arms-** View your live fire exercises as combined arms exercises. From the fire team to the battalion level, seek opportunities to combine direct and

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indirect fire and movement, deliberately planned for and carefully and safely executed, to engineer that inextricable dilemma for the enemy, the dilemma which places him at a disadvantage in terms of combat power and terrain. Commanders will instill at every echelon an understanding of effective combined arms operations.

During training, supporting arms units, both direct (Heavy and Medium machine-gun sections, Snipers, Javelins) and indirect fire (60mm, 81mm mortar sections, and when able, artillery), must develop the skills to employ massed, surprised fires to enable maneuver to close with to a position of advantage. **SUPPRESSION IS STILL THE CRITICAL INFANTRY TASK.** Precision counts once we have secured the decisive position of advantage (the killing terrain), where the enemy's destruction is certain, and we are ready press the effects of our weapons systems in the final meters of the attack.

**4. Physical, Mental, and Moral Development:**

<b><u>PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT</u></b> <b>(Technical)</b>	<b><u>MENTAL DEVELOPMENT</u></b> <b>(Tactical)</b>	<b><u>MORAL DEVELOPMENT</u></b> <b>(Leadership)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Techniques and procedures</li><li>• Battle Drills</li><li>• Capable NCOs</li><li>• Standards based compliance</li><li>• Repetition</li><li>• Physical Conditioning</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Doctrine &amp; principles</li><li>• Academics / Education</li><li>• Situational training</li><li>• Mental endurance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Experience</li><li>• Formal/Unit Schools</li><li>• Compliance w/ virtues</li><li>• Positive Approach/ Climate</li><li>• Cohesive Units</li></ul>
<b>*<u>SKILLS</u></b>	<b>*<u>WISDOM</u></b>	<b>*<u>CHARACTER</u></b>

Every training evolution must contribute to developing both the individual and unit in the physical, mental, and moral domains. This is primarily accomplished by the standards, environment, and creativity exercised by the trainer. Done correctly, we will measurably increase our warfighting skills, wisdom, and attitude across our teams.

**5. Training Principles:** The following underlying principles are provided to help you plan, coordinate, and execute training:

a. **STANDARDS BASED TRAINING:** METL Mastery utilizing the Systems Approach to Training (SAT). Always base your training and evaluation on standards. Have a copy at all training events. Adhere to the standards and write down progression. As we grow more capable, we will still have limitations. It is critical that we can communicate both our strengths and our weaknesses (which we will have) to our HHQ. The T&R is our Bible, ARTEP, 1stDiv Schools, TBS/SOI MOS Manuals are other references.

b. **DIAGNOSTICS & EVALUATION:** Training will be evaluated by doing, not saying. Practical application is the preferred method of teaching Marines any skill that you want them to retain. Any period of instruction should involve a minimum amount of lecture and as much practical application and evaluation as possible, but academics are a key foundation in the

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conduct of mission tactics. Prior to commencing a training block, or progressing, assess the effectiveness of the training and retention by the individual/ unit. Remediate individuals and units when necessary. Use competitive events to test mastery of a subject when able. Reward winners. Bring mediocre back for more. Always critique every aspect of training immediately after the event. Use a pre-prepared checklist to aid in focused dialogue.

c. LEADER AS PRIMARY TRAINER: The squads, sections, and platoons must be trained by their leaders. Officers are responsible for planning, coordinating, and executing the training, but SNCOs and NCOs must instruct it! Our team and squad leaders must demonstrate wisdom in order to earn the complete trust and confidence of their Marines. Initially focus on training our trainers and then turn your NCOs loose to train, build, and lead their units! Armed with professional wisdom and proven competence, they are great assets, so use them to train our Marines! While we continue to improve the technical and tactical abilities of our small units, let's continue to focus attention on those Marines who will assume the critical billets of team and squad leaders when the battalion returns from our PACOM deployment ~December 2019. We must not only prepare them tactically and technically, but also teach them how to plan, prepare, and execute challenging and demanding training to our standard.

d. TRAIN HOW WE FIGHT: Train as we will fight. This seems obvious but doesn't happen all the time. Perform each event as if lives depend on it... because our lives will depend on the effectiveness of every repetition in training. Learning how to fight requires more than battle drills and repetition. Although technical expertise is part of it, learning how to fight requires a mastery of the situational application of combat power. We must focus on what we will "probably" encounter, not what we may "possibly encounter". Heavy reliance on situational training exercises, TDGs, sand table exercises, TACSOP, TDK, and force-on-force training will provide the unit with a reservoir of information and experience if we cross the "outliers." Every force-on-force exercise should utilize ITES equipment to reinforce good marksmanship skills and instill realism into our blank fire training. Additionally, never lose an opportunity to instill realism into training. There is no such thing as going "admin" while in the field. Don't be the unit that when the planned training event is completed, such as live fire at a range or during a specific tactical evolution, immediately puts on soft covers, stops carrying their weapons and/or wearing their gear properly. Security shall always be established. We must never lose our tactical focus, even when we conduct an after-action review or critique of a training exercise. A guardian angel will be established to overwatch the event. We will establish defensive positions or perimeters with proper communications, patrols and LPs/Ops in lieu of "admin" bivouacs. During periods of reduced visibility, we will train our night defensive activities or conduct night offensive operations. Continuing actions of Marines will be emphasized constantly until they become second nature. Although we must sleep in the field, rest will be conducted only to ensure training can be conducted safely. Time is too scarce for rest to ever become the main thing. Units must always seek cover and concealed positions; employ security and guardian angels as if in close contact with the enemy. These habits must be internalized in order to save the lives of our Marines in our next engagement – assess their effectiveness often.

e. SENSING THE BATTLEFIELD THROUGH EDUCATION: Seeing or sensing, the battlefield requires an innate understanding of the enemy, the mission, and the terrain. Every

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time we go to the field these variables should change. An active and independent opposing “will” is the critical element of any force-on-force exercise. Use these exercises to improve our small unit leader’s decision-making skills and ability to execute advanced techniques in a fluid environment ripe with friction. Allow our units to make mistakes in order to draw out the lessons learned and inform/refine our SOPs. During all debriefs, highlight the relationship between decisions made/communicated, actions effected, and results achieved.

f. TIME MANAGEMENT: Our most valuable resource after the individual Marine is our Marines’ time. Don’t waste it. Training plans must be detailed but flexible. Most units do not plan training in sufficient detail to maximize available time and prevent unforeseen delays. Training schedules often lack detail concerning the specific part of the reference used (Chapter 4, Section II, Paragraph 1, et ..), the actual instructor (Sgt X), the specific evaluation standard, a schedule for concurrent training, a rotational schedule for any round-robin type training events, and a debrief or remediation plan. Amplifying instructions written in the remarks column should address details that clarify the event for outside agencies and special staff officers who may need to support this training event, as well as HHQ who may want to observe training. These additional details ensure a well-conceived and smooth-running training evolution. Every training area has certain rules and regulations that govern training; wherever we train we must quickly learn the “rules of the road” so that we can maximize our training time and eliminate delays. Experience and practice will provide us insight over time.

Minimize friction by planning for it. Concurrent training must be an integral part of every live-fire range. It should focus on perishable individual skills and support the primary goal of that particular range or period of instruction. All NCO’s must also have at a minimum (5) hip-pocket classes and several TDGs ready to go. These classes are designed as a response to unforeseen delays in training and must never be seen as merely a filler. Hip-pocket classes must also be well-prepared, rehearsed, and logistically supportable. Priority for hip-pocket classes are first aid, weapons presentation drills, individual and unit remedial training, TDGs, call-for-fire, land navigation, communications, and reporting procedures. All these classes must be based off standards that the instructor can use to evaluate the Marines’ mastery of the subject matter.

g. CREATION OF SOPS: One of the keys to combat success is the implicit communication between follower and leader. This can only be established during the battalion’s training cycle through the creation of a relevant, workable Tactical Standing Operating Procedures (TACSOP) that lay down the common rules of how the Battalion, Companies, and Platoons intend to fight in combat. These SOPs must be simple and 2-dimensional, germane to jungle, mountain, desert, and urban operations; they are only a baseline. We must then ruthlessly develop our leaders’ ability to ORIENT on the terrain and the dispositions of friendly and enemy forces so they can make the tactical decision and direct the “on the fly audible.” This experience will cut down on needless orders, and more importantly enable us to leverage time as a weapon. Our platoon, company and battalion TACSOPs must be constantly cross-walked and refined by “lessons to be learned” from executors at every echelon; their ideas and suggestions count, so these documents need deliberate, periodic review. Just prior to deployment, we will publish our proven SOPs, informed by rigorous evaluation throughout the PTP.

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6. **Safety:** When we go into combat a large part of our safety will depend on our readiness, training, and education because at that time our mission will take priority over the welfare of our Marines. **NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN PREPARING AND PRESERVING OUR MARINES FOR BATTLE IN ORDER TO ENSURE VICTORY AND MINIMIZE CASUALTIES!** In peacetime we can replace everything in this battalion except life and limb. Therefore, casualties during peacetime are unacceptable. This applies both on and off duty, as well as to both on and off base. This applies to operational safety, as well as recreational safety. Reference my letter on Force Preservation and High-Risk Behavior.

It is imperative that every Marine and Sailor understands that in combat, enemy actions will influence the number and extent of our casualties; in peacetime, OUR actions alone will be the determining factor. Therefore, safety will be our primary consideration during the conduct of every training evolution. Nothing we will do in training is worth jeopardizing the lives or well-being of our people. Prior to execution, I expect every leader to review all applicable safety regulations prior to conducting any training. You must clearly assess Risk -vs- Gain in all you plan to undertake. An Operational Risk Management matrix will be done to assess risk and to develop tactics, techniques, and procedures to mitigate it. **IT WILL BE SIGNED BY THE LEADER FOR EVERY EVENT.**

Every Marine serves as a "safety officer," and I expect them to call a safety halt, without fear of recrimination, if they observe anything they suspect is unsafe. Once the unsafe condition is corrected or the Marine is educated on why the apparently unsafe condition is in fact safe, we will resume training. Of particular importance, I want small unit leaders to be especially vigilant for indications of heat stress. I expect leaders to look their Marines in the eyes and compensate for their fatigue. Slow down or stop if need be, but do not exceed the safety envelope of your Marines. Nothing will violate trust between the leader and the led faster than creating needless casualties.

#### **A SAFETY PRE-MORTEM REMINDER:**

Training accidents and training tragedies occur in every case because leaders exceeded the experience and capabilities of their Marines and Sailors or pushed their men to levels of physical and mental fatigue where weapons maintenance or safety awareness was lost; failed to properly familiarize themselves and their men with their equipment and consequently employed their weapons incorrectly or in an unsafe manner; violated, either intentionally or unintentionally, local and standing range safety regulations; failed to rehearse/conduct dry runs; and/or failed to properly brief their people and supervise.

I strictly charge every commander and leader in this battalion to maximize opportunities to Shoot, Move, Communicate, Evacuate, and Employ Effective Combined Arms. But, I expect leaders at all levels to know and respect the training levels of those entrusted to their care, to look into their eyes and assess their level of fatigue/health, and to be thoroughly and completely conversant with all applicable safety and range regulations. Do your duty, train hard, but train smart. Protect our teammates. We will need everyone to be successful in the fight ahead.

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7. In summary, I intend to maintain an atmosphere where battalion leaders are able to maximize all available resources in order to relentlessly and aggressively use every opportunity to conduct safe, effective, stimulating and challenging training. Education for every Marine and Sailor in this battalion is critical for the execution if our plans are to survive “first contact” with our opponents. “Plans are nothing, planning is everything,” but this mantra is only of utility if our squads and platoons are prepared for and able to adapt after crossing the line of departure with what they are carrying on their backs. Never go to the field to teach a skill for the first time; we must not underestimate the value of academics in a classroom setting to develop conceptual understanding and then apply concepts in the field during training to develop refined wisdom across our team. I see our critical vulnerability as the personnel turnover and turbulence within the battalion prior to stabilization for deployment – never miss the opportunity to refine our written SOPs, especially platoon SOPs which capture our squad battle drills. I see our greatest strength as the innovative and determined attitude of each and every leader -- we must sustain this willpower and hone our desire to win, while judiciously guarding against mistaking our own “enthusiasm as a capability.”

8. **ENDSTATE:** A combat ready infantry battalion with a “*Fight Tonight*” mindset able to execute all Core Mission Essential Tasks NLT 1 March 2019 where Marine and Sailor has proven competent and reliable as a valued teammate able to perform individual tasks to standards, while maintaining discipline and reason even when fatigued; all units at echelon demonstrate cohesion, consistency, and pride during the performance of collective tasks regardless of environmental conditions.

  
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