

Commander's Intent and Guidance for 6th MCD

Marines – This paper describes my commander's intent and guidance. As we begin our relationship together, it is important for you to understand my expectations, how I expect us to do business, what's important to me, and what *you* should expect from *your* leadership. All Marines are *expected* and *required* to read this paper closely and understand its contents completely. Ask questions if you don't. I look forward to discussing it with you in the weeks and months ahead because, as in the past, we face challenging times.



1. Context. The Marine Corps makes Marines, wins battles, and transitions better citizens back to society. While our primary mission in the 6th Marine Corps District is the “making Marines” part, we must always be cognizant of the larger impact we have on the American peoples’ perceptions of the Marine Corps – our Corps’ true strategic center of gravity. So as we enthusiastically execute our responsibilities, I want us to be aware of a confluence of factors producing *profound changes* in the strategic context in which we’ll operate.

First, we are entering a new era in the Department of Defense in which our fiscal resources will be severely constrained. This is a different environment than many of you have become familiar with over the past ten years, but one which is here nonetheless. Because the spigots of money have been turned off due to our Nation’s very serious fiscal challenges, we will need to be careful, respectful, and frugal with how we spend every cent of our taxpayer’s hard-earned dollars. While frugality has long been a hallmark of Marines, now we’ve really got to prove it. At the same time our fiscal and personnel resources will be more constrained, our missions will *increase* over the next three years due to the large departing cohorts enlisted during the 202K build-up from 2008-2010. In short, we will need to become *smarter* and *more efficient* with how we do business.

Second, we will work with many Marines and families who are weary after a decade of sustained combat operations and frequent deployments. Many of our Marines will face personal challenges requiring the most concerned, positive, active, and intrusive leadership we have. I expect all of us to be actively involved and engaged in helping our Marines find solutions to their problems, and then following-up at multiple levels to ensure they achieve success. This involvement will never stop, and I view problem-solving as a continuing action of concerned and engaged leadership. We should also understand that in the current recruiting environment, we will have to exercise more direct, *active and engaged leadership* as part of our collective obligation to care for one another and our families to mitigate the risks and stressors encountered on recruiting duty. *Stay active, visible, positive, and engaged!*

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Third, our Nation is navigating a strategic inflection point characterized by an accelerating proliferation of information technology, social networking tools, and an increased capacity for individual actors to exert disproportional influence -- for both good or ill. Accordingly, in this exceedingly complex and dynamic environment, our ethics and performance (and that of the applicants we enlist) can (and will) have a dramatic impact upon our institution as a whole. We need to understand that we will never attract and enlist quality men and women with the character our Nation needs, and our Corps can never build them, if an applicant's first experience with a Marine is tainted in any way by unethical behavior. We will set the ethical bar and the enduring standards for our newest Marines. The "age of influence" is upon us, and we need to have both internal control measures and the right positive incentives to shape behavior, culture, and ethics in ways that reinforce who we are.

Our role in this -- *together* -- is to shape our Marine Corps for the future to ensure we have the right people, with the right talent, energy, character, ethics, and performance capabilities necessary to meet our Nation's future national security requirements. "Highest Performance with the Highest Ethics" is our standard!

2. Purpose. Recruiting duty is about *more* than just contracting and shipping applicants. As such, these objectives will guide our every action and be the basis for our daily decision-making:

- We will reinforce and expand upon the trust and respect the American people have in their Marine Corps by – above all else -- keeping our Honor clean. *We will never knowingly disappoint the American people!*
- We will shape the future of our Marine Corps by prospecting for, attracting, inspiring, selecting, and preparing top quality applicants for enlistment and commissioning into the Marine Corps. *We will never compromise our standards on what it takes to earn the title "Marine"!*
- We will support and enable our Marines and their families to be successful, happy, productive, and fulfilled citizens who believe in our mission and the good they are achieving for our Nation and the Marine Corps. *We will never fail to support a Marine or their family member in time of need!*

3. Method. We will achieve these objectives by creating and maintaining an environment of "humility, authenticity, and transparency" that extends to every corner of our command. Our climate will be one in which ethical behavior rises to the top. I intend to publicly recognize and reward those Marines who demonstrate "Highest Performance with the Highest Ethics" with swift and

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generous awards. Leaders will be active, visible, and fully engaged in every aspect of our Marines' lives; Marines will do the same for their applicants. Expect me to constantly check on this to see how we're doing. We will take "ownership" of the organizations we're a part of and maintain a sense of balance between the needs of the present with a *long-term* outlook. We will provide stability to our Marines whenever possible and provide for their professional development and upward progress. Finally, in this complex and decentralized environment, we will establish and maintain "strings" on each other and be *ever-vigilant* in stamping out any form of behavior that causes harm to the command climate we are all committed to achieving.

4. End State. Our goals are ambitious but achievable:

- a) All 8 Recruiting Stations achieve the Commandant's "Superior Achiever Award" with no end-of-year waivers.
- b) Because of positive, engaged, proactive leadership at all levels, we do not lose one single Marine or family member to an act of suicide, suicide attempt, or suicide gesture (ideations are detected, acted upon, and brought to the command's attention immediately).
- c) Because of positive, engaged, proactive leadership at all levels, we do not lose one single Marine or family member to drug abuse.
- d) We *completely eliminate* all forms of sexual misconduct in our command, from having a workplace that is free of sexual banter, innuendo, and unprofessionalism to having professional relationships with all of our Marines and applicants.
- e) We grow and develop an average of 10 Career Recruiters per year.
- f) We leave behind a lasting and positive impression of the Marine Corps with the American people (external vice internally focused).

5. Execution. The four interconnected areas described below will enable the accomplishment of our objectives and achievement of our end-states:

- a) Culture. Our culture is the collective behavior of the command's leadership, and will be one of "humility, authenticity, and transparency." The three areas I will focus on are: 1) professionalism, 2) personal discipline, and 3) physical fitness. First, professionalism. Being part of a profession means we take an elevated tone in all that we do. We are respectful and considerate of others; we listen carefully to understand, not to respond; we understand the power of inquiry over advocacy; and we understand what it takes to become a great communicator. We will be especially watchful for the "boiling frog" syndrome of degrading and

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unprofessional behavior and language – often disguised as jokes and other forms of “jack-assery” – seeping into our culture and ultimately setting the conditions for bad actions to occur. Make no mistake: language precedes action and shapes behavior! Unprofessional conduct and incremental tolerance of lower standards can, and will, lead to disaster. Second, personal discipline. The personal habits we bring to recruiting duty are the same that have served us so well as squad leaders, platoon sergeants, section chiefs, platoon commanders, and company commanders downrange – they are how we do business! Personal discipline on recruiting duty is no different, and is reflected by our appearance in uniform (dress blue deltas), adherence to systematic recruiting, energetic prospecting, setting the right example for our applicants, and doing the hard right thing as a matter of routine. Third, physical fitness. Physical fitness is a cornerstone of all other forms of personal excellence, helps prepare our applicants for boot camp, and is what the American people expect of us. Keep yourself physically fit. Expect me to constantly check on the state of our culture, paying close attention to the three areas above, and tell me if/when you think we're veering off course.

- b) People. Respecting the dignity of every individual we interact with is absolutely essential to accomplishing our objectives. A person's dignity and self-respect is the “innermost armament of their soul” and at the very root of their self-worth, self-esteem, and personal resilience. We will be ever-vigilant in guarding and protecting this dignity and self-respect in our Marines and applicants, and strengthening their resilience whenever we can. Tell people what they can and should be and they will strive to achieve it. Never, ever violate or degrade the dignity of another individual! In all of our actions with Marines, applicants, and the American people, we should ask ourselves this simple question: if the Commandant and Sergeant Major were looking over one shoulder and the Marine's and/or applicant's parents were looking over the other shoulder, would we still take the same action? If not, you'd best think again! As noted above, in the context we're operating in, that's the standard.
- c) Processes. I believe in the effectiveness of systematic recruiting, and expect us to know, practice, and enforce it across the District. I have empowered the District staff to ensure we remain in compliance with all MCRC and ERR policies and directives. I want our staffs to work together to foster great relationships up and down the chain of command. My goal is for the staff to always “add value” in all interactions. I expect us to make deadlines and produce quality work the first time. Administrative matters such as awards, fitness reports, reenlistments, investigations, and administrative action forms are important to Marines' careers and their opportunities for promotion, so they are therefore very important to all leaders within the command. In all administrative matters and issues, we

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will treat others (to include our applicants) the way we want to be treated. *If this does not occur, I need to know about it!* I will do my part to ensure all administrative processes dealing with Marines, civilians, and applicants in this command are completed thoroughly, correctly, and on time, the first time.

- d) Organization. While we will operate within a hierarchical command structure going from the Marine Recruiter to: the RSS-RS-MCD-ERR-MCRC- and ultimately CMC, we have the talented people and tools necessary to function in a *flat way*. This means information is transmitted quickly, completely, and transparently. I have empowered the district staff to streamline their processes and eliminate bottlenecks for routine tasks (such as waivers) to make mission accomplishment easier for our Marines. *If there is an unexpected bottleneck somewhere, I need to know about it.* I will look for “full-service” RS command groups who communicate freely, clearly, and often with each other; whose members are also able to see the “big picture” of the recruiting environment they operate in; and who “*enjoy getting their hands dirty*” by helping Marines with the various components of systematic recruiting. I will be especially watchful for command groups who stove-pipe information and don't take a larger view of what is best for their organization. *Effective command groups expand the capabilities of their Marines.* Finally, we will conduct frequent and intrusive inspections to ensure proper supervision is in place and business is being conducted properly. These inspections are intended to be helpful in nature and to find more than one thing wrong. I expect compliance with our inspection teams and all identified discrepancies to be fixed within 90 days of the inspection; expect me to follow up appropriately to ensure this is done. My guidance on inspections is simple: *trust but verify!*

6. CCIRs.

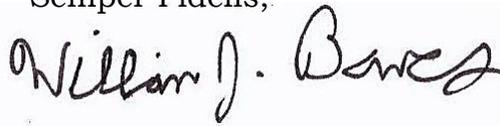
- Any allegation of recruiter misconduct, malpractice, and/or fraud.
- Any incident of suspected officer, officer candidate, or Staff NCO misconduct.
- Any incident that has a severe impact on the normal functioning of recruiting activities (destructive weather, RSS closure, etc).
- Any escalation in the Force Protection Condition.
- Any incident that is likely to result in adverse media coverage.

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- Any unauthorized absence of any Marine, Sailor, or civilian assigned to 6th MCD.
- Any death, injury, critical injury or terminal illness of a 6th MCD Marine, Sailor, Civilian, immediate family member, applicant in the delayed entry program or at MCRD boot camp and/or OCS.
- Any critical infrastructure or computer network disruption/failure.
- In addition to the above, any incident that triggers a HHQ CCIR/SIR reporting requirement.
- RS Commanders' discretion – when in doubt, REPORT.

7. Conclusion. I look forward to working closely with all of you in this mission which is so vital to the future of the Marine Corps and our country.

Semper Fidelis,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William J. Bowers". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name and title.

William J. Bowers
Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps
Commanding