



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
TRAINING AND EDUCATION COMMAND  
1019 ELLIOT ROAD  
QUANTICO, VIRGINIA 22134

INFORMATION PAPER

Subj: DACOWITS Marine Corps Recruit Depot Integration Requests for Information (RFI)

1. Purpose. To provide answers to DACOWITS MCRD integration initiative RFIs

2. RFI

**RFI #5:** In December 2022, the Marine Corps provided a briefing on the status of Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD) integration, following the release of the University of Pittsburgh (UPITT) study. In this brief, the Marine Corps presented an update on the 18 secondary recommendations outlined in the study. As of December 2022, there were 12 recommendations that had been or were in the process of being implemented, of which 6 were pending further analysis and follow-on recommendations. The committee requests a written response from Marine Corps on the following:

- **For the following alternate models from the study provide an update on planning and implementation:**
  - **Alternate model #1 (mixed-gender drill instructor teams in integrated companies):** In the December 2022 briefing, the Marine Corps indicated it did not plan to implement this recommended model from the study. Please provide any updated information on implementation plans (including timelines) or justification if there are no plans for implementation.

*The Marine Corps analyzed the implementation of mixed gender drill instructor teams and determined that it is not feasible to implement with the current manpower inventory. The required increase of female DIs would negatively impact females within other special duty assignments and Fleet Marine Forces. The Marine Corps Entry Level Training Advisory Council is examining all viable options to address this recommendation given the current personnel environment.*

- **Alternate model #2 (Integrated Company Plus):** Please provide the list of training events and activities where male and female recruits are currently integrated at or below the platoon level. Please include training events that are planned for further integration at or below the platoon level in the future, including timelines for implementation of integration.

*The integrated company plus model has become the foundational integration method the Service is using at both MCRDs. The following events are integrated at or below the platoon level: Basic Warrior Training, Crucible, Land Navigation, Confidence Course, Physical Fitness Events, Combat Marksmanship Program Tables 1 and 2, Bayonet Assault Course, Obstacle Course, Swim Qualification, Rappel Tower, Marine Corps Martial Arts Program, Gas Chamber, Team Week, Field Meet, Initial Strength Tests, Physical Fitness Test, and Combat Fitness Test.*

- **Alternate model #3 (integrated platoon model):** In the December 2022 briefing, the Marine Corps indicated it did not plan to implement this recommended model from the study. Please provide any updated information on implementation plans (including timelines) or justification if there are no plans for implementation.

*As originally briefed to DACOWITS in December 2022, the following training events remain segregated below the platoon level: core values guided discussions (12 topics), academic study time, tactical combat casualty care, some academic classes, rifle range grass week, platoon-level inspections, close order drill. These events are conducted at the platoon level, some in the squad bay. During recruit training the squad bay is used as both a training venue and billeting space for platoons. US Code Title 10 mandates segregated billeting areas for males and females, which is why the platoons are comprised of same sex recruits.*

- **For the following recommendations that have been accomplished provide the specific actions taken to implement each one:**
  - **Establish and use drill instructor working groups at each stage (before, during, and after) of gender integration to more readily anticipate and identify challenges, innovation solutions, and demonstrated successes.**

*As of August 2022, both MCRDs have implemented drill instructor working groups to share lessons learned during each cycle. Drill instructor working groups occur before company pickups, in stride, and post-cycle.*

- **Incorporate explicit training and socialization on respect into all education materials and training opportunities.**

*As of August 2022, the Drill Instructor program of instruction has been updated to include additional training and socialization on respect into education materials and training opportunities.*

- **Incorporate primary prevention education on sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic abuse, and equal opportunity courses and Core Values guided discussions. Provide recruits education, training, and discussion about "what right looks like" in addition to course curriculum already delivered.**

*The Marine Corps currently provides training on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) and Equal Opportunity (EO). Additionally, the Recruit Training program of instruction has multiple core value guided discussions, which include vignettes relating to SAPR and EO, where recruits are taught leadership principles and respect.*

- **Enforce a zero-tolerance policy for training cadre, drill instructors, and recruits using sexually explicit, gender-based, or derogatory language in the training environment**

*TECOM will continue to enforce our zero-tolerance policy on inappropriate or derogatory sexually explicit language. All allegations of sexual harassment are taken seriously and properly investigated in accordance with published orders and directives.*

- **Develop or task recruit leadership positions to aid drill instructors with recruit accountability checks when forming gender-integrated units.**

*Recruits are currently given additional tasks within platoons to aid drill instructors. From carrying the guidon to assuming responsibilities as squad leader within their recruit platoon and finally to the rigorous Warfighter Evaluation of their Marine competencies and leadership potential during the Crucible, recruits are evaluated more often than just the Leadership Reaction Course evaluation. The Senior Drill Instructor Recruit Evaluation provides an all-encompassing evaluation of a recruit's leadership potential. However, while recruit billet holders assist drill instructors in ensuring the platoon accomplishes assigned tasks, the drill instructor is responsible for recruit accountability.*

- **For the following recommendations that are currently underway provide an update and timeline for implementation for each recommendation:**
  - **Provide explicit and consistent leadership statements about how current or future changes to gender integration approaches at MCRDs connect with the broader mission of producing basically trained Marines.**

*All Marine recruits are trained to rigorous standards that produces a uniform experience for the recruit, regardless of gender, location, or background. At the end of recruit training, each man or woman has been transformed into a Marine by rigorous training and initiated into our Corps' shared legacy.*

- **Conduct regular evaluations of the recruit training "product": a basically trained Marine. These evaluations should connect data from a basic Marine's performance and outcomes in the ELT pipeline and their first fleet assignment and should be used as an opportunity to collect information relevant to the impact of the Service's gender integration efforts.**

*The TECOM Entry-Level Training Operational Planning Team is tasked with assessing the impact of the Marine Corps' gender integration efforts.*

- **Review and update educational curriculum and imagery in training environments to represent women and be more inclusive of their contributions to the Marine Corps institutional legacy.**

*Additional examples of women and their contributions to the Marine Corps' legacy were recently added during the Recruit Training Course Content Review Board for inclusion to the Recruit Training program of instruction.*

- **Increase number of female personnel at MCRD San Diego (training cadre and leadership) while growing female drill instructor and recruit population to fulfill NDAA mandate.**

*Manpower and Reserve Affairs continues to increase the assignment of additional female personnel to MCRD San Diego in coordination with an increase in female recruit throughput. MCRD San Diego is estimated to be fully in compliance with NDAA female drill instructor and recruit population mandates by FY26.*

- **Increase efforts to recruit women into the Marine Corps.**

*Marine Corps Recruiting Command (MCRC) is currently recruiting a higher percentage of women than previous years. MCRC's FY20 enlisted female mission was 2,508. MCRC's FY23 enlisted female mission is 2,890, an increase of just over 13% from FY20's mission.*

- **High initial workloads coupled with injury rates and decrements in strength and power performance - warrants incorporation of a periodized approach to physical training that emphasizes progression and proper technique development.**

*A new physical training curriculum with detailed exercise and movement technique instruction and a new training schedule with an updated physical training progression are in development for the Recruit Training POI with a target of FY24 implementation.*

- **High relative percentage of hip injuries in female Marine Corps recruits during gender-integrated training - investigation of causes and customized injury mitigation programs recommended.**

*Movement under load has historically been linked as one factor increasing risk for hip injury. The USMC pack has been recently updated with alternate shoulder straps and hip belt, which is intended to improve load distribution and provide increased comfort to smaller stature recruits. Instruction is also being added to the recruit curriculum that emphasizes how to adjust, pack, don, and doff the USMC pack. Leveraging recent research from the Naval Health Research Center (NHRC), a more gradual hike progression, starting with a shorter distance and lighter instructional load is currently in development. Additionally, NHRC will be conducting phase 2 of the above-mentioned study titled, "Holistic Monitoring of Musculoskeletal Injuries (MSKI) in the United States Marine Corps" at MCRD San Diego by the end of FY23. There are two specific aims of the study: 1) Quantify the training load and estimate caloric intake and expenditure for the first 10 weeks of boot camp via accelerometer, actigraphy data and plate waste studies, 2) Quantify change in sex-steroid specific hormones over the training cycle in both male and female recruits and determine relationship to MSKI.*

- **For the following recommendations that were still pending decision in December 2022, provide an update on the decision. For those recommendations that will not be implemented, provide a justification for why not. For those that will be implemented, provide implementation action steps, timeline, and plan.**

- **Establish a Marine Corps definition and/or strategic mission/vision for gender integration in recruit training.**

*All Marine recruits are trained to rigorous standards that produces a uniform experience for the recruit, regardless of gender, location, or background. At the end of recruit training, each man or woman has been transformed into a basic Marine by rigorous training and initiated into our Corps' shared legacy.*

- **Restrict those who teach key/milestone sexual harassment and sexual assault courses to full-time SAPR personnel who are subject matter experts.**

Currently, drill instructors are trained in accordance with Marine Corps Order 1752.5C. The drill instructor that teaches sexual harassment and sexual assault prevention courses is certified as a victim advocate (VA) according to standards-based training, which produces a standard experience for the recruit, regardless of gender, location, or background. At the end of SAPR training, we have a Marine who has been provided critical information necessary to prevent, identify and report any instance of harassment or assault, and understands the assets at their disposal to combat it. A Marine possesses exemplary character; is physically and mentally tough; possesses basic individual combat skills and is dedicated to the continued development and education as a leader, critical thinker, decisive actor, effective communicator, and a Warfighter. All DIs are held to a standard, such that their period of instruction is audited by Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) personnel and company leadership to ensure adherence to the lesson plan. Lesson plans are developed by Headquarters Marine Corps Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) based on known policy, reporting options, resources, and prevention practices, and provided to the MCRDs for instruction. There is little discretion for instructors to deviate from prepared lesson plans. The Marine Corps is undergoing a phased elimination of collateral duty Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARC) and SAPR VAs in accordance with Independent Review Commission (IRC) requirements. Commands will retain their current collateral duty personnel until full-time civilian personnel are on boarded and operational. Timeline for implementation is in alignment with IRC Plans of Action and Milestones and dependent on civilian hiring actions at both Recruiting Depots.

- **Replace gendered identifiers (e.g., "sir," "ma'am") in the primary salutation or response to drill instructors with gender-neutral language such as "drill instructor," "senior drill instructor," "senior," "DI," or "SDI."**

In August 2022, TECOM initiated the Marine Corps Entry Level Training Advisory Council to create a forum for continued evaluation and analysis of the Marine Corps progress across the entry level training continuum, to include gender integration efforts. It is scheduled to convene again in August 2023 and will address this recommendation.

- **Build an additional competitive element for series or companies to work toward to facilitate drill instructor and recruit investment in a shared identity beyond the platoon. The MCRDs track training data for recruit companies and platoons.**

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- **Potential relationship between attrition among female Marine Corps recruits and psychological resilience measured on the Connor-Davidson scale - further investigation recommended.**

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include gender integration efforts. It is scheduled to convene again in August 2023 and will address this recommendation.

- **Association between previous quantity of strength training in female Marine Corps recruits, and attrition and preservation of neuromuscular function - further investigation recommended.**

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*Way Ahead: The Marine Corps is fulfilling the FY20 NDAA requirement by executing our integrated training model at both recruit depots since the beginning of 2021. MCRD Parris Island is fully in compliance and MCRD San Diego is on track to meet the requirement as directed. Currently, there are no impediments to our gender integration efforts. In FY26, TECOM will reach a steady state for male and female shipping at both MCRDs. Today, every female recruit at both MCRDs, trains alongside her male counterpart in integrated companies.*