

Subj: DACOWITS RFI #1: GENDER INTEGRATION

1. Purpose. Response to DACOWITS RFI via DON Tracker Tasker 2017-MRA_MP_MPE-000000057.002.001.002.

2. Background

a. In his book, *The Warrior Ethos* (March 2011), author Steven Pressfield defines warrior ethos as "a code of conduct that embodies a life where integrity, loyalty, honor, and selflessness, and courage are one's guide."

b. As stated in Chapter 1 (Our Ethos) of the 2014 Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 6-11, *Leading Marines*: "Marines come from all walks of life, but being a Marine transcends our differences. Being a Marine is not a job or a particular occupational specialty. It is a calling. It is a state of mind. Being a Marine comes from the eagle, globe, and anchor tattooed on the soul of everyone who has worn our cloth. It is a mark seared in our innermost being that comes from the rite of passage in boot camp at Parris Island or San Diego, or initial officer training at Quantico - when young men and women earn the title "Marine." Once they undergo the transformation, they become a Marine for life.

c. The 1995 version of *Leading Marines* stated "Being a Marine is not male or female, majority or minority; nor is it rank insignia."

d. MCWP 6-11 also states that "The USMC core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment and our Corps' traditions lie at the heart of our Marine Corps ethos."

e. USMC recruit training was consolidated under a single Recruit Training Regiment in 1986, and since then all recruits, regardless of gender, are required to complete the same 70 training days, follow the same training program of instruction (POI), and must complete the same graduation requirements to earn the title United States Marine.

3. Key Points

a. The USMC model for recruit training has a significant positive effect on warrior ethos and standards achievement by:

- Instilling the ethos, high levels of confidence and esprit de corps necessary for recruits to be successful in earning the title Marine.
- Team-building at the platoon level that creates positive competition and raises expectations for individual performance and standards.
- Maximizing Physical Fitness performance while minimizing injuries.
- Developing the foundation for success prior to follow on training and ultimately service in the Operating Forces.

b. While not fully gender integrated (boy-girl-boy-girl in the same formation), the USMC training model enables young men and women to focus on transforming from civilians to Marines without distractions, and to develop a

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strong initial foundation for Marine standards, ethos, and their identity as a Marine free of the complications inherent in a mixed gender environment.

c. The USMC training model provides a balance of strong, same and mixed gender role models for recruits to emulate while simultaneously enabling a gradual increase in co-location and integration by training phase where the same training is conducted by male and female recruits, to the same standards and with the same requirements to earn the title United States Marine.

d. The primary USMC recruit training unit is the platoon, which fosters the initial concept of unit cohesion.

e. The central figures in a recruit's life are his or her platoon Drill Instructors (DIs). The intensive relationship between recruit and DI is the foundation of the USMC recruit training experience and is significantly dependent on the time spent in the unit squad bay (platoon living quarters). The ability of DI's to teach, train, and mentor their recruits is maximized by the recruits being organized into same-gender cohesive platoons that live, work, and train together in an open squad bay, which is where the transformation happens.

f. Directly related to warrior ethos and the effectiveness of USMC training, the model all but eliminates sexual misconduct between DIs and recruits.

- While the USMC has seen an increase in reporting in recruit training, the vast majority of cases are almost exclusively prior to service, not an increase in sexual assault in recruit training. We have created the environment where recruits are comfortable reporting prior sexual assaults and they are then able to get the necessary counseling to help them be successful in achieving their goal of becoming a Marine.

g. The USMC has continued to look at its training model for events in the POI where there are opportunities for increased integration, and where we have found them and it makes sense, we have implemented them. Such as:

- Water Survival training (Gender Neutral)
- Rappel Tower, CBRN, and CBRN confidence chamber (Gender Neutral)
- Marksmanship Training (Gender Neutral)
- The Final PFT and CFT (Gender Normed)
- Combat Endurance Test (Gender Neutral)
- Religious services (Gender Neutral)
- Family Day and Naturalization Ceremonies (Gender Neutral)
- Graduation Ceremony (Gender Neutral)

h. There have also been commander and staff assignment changes designed to facilitate an increase in mixed gender leadership in traditionally single-gender Recruit Training Battalions:

- Male and Female XO's assigned opposite gender training battalions.
- Male and Female Company and Series Commanders, Assistant Series Commanders, 1stSgts, and Chief DIs assigned to opposite gender training companies.

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