



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20380-0001

IN REPLY REFER TO:

CMC-MPP
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22 Aug 94

WHITE LETTER NO. 13-94

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps
To: All General Officers
All Commanding Officers
All Officers in Charge

Subj: FIRST-TERM NON-EAS ATTRITION

1. As you are well aware, we are faced with a period of austerity with no reduction in our mission requirements. After drawing down for the past few years, we expect to level off and remain at an end strength of 174/42K for the foreseeable future. Remolding our existing force into the right grade and skill mixes for the future with limited dollars is a complicated and difficult process. If we are to be successful, we must carefully steward our manpower resources. That is why I am soliciting your support to ensure that we protect our most valuable asset: our enlisted Marines.

2. Current first-term enlisted Marine staffing is lower than desired due to high entry level training and transient (T2) levels, which have been driven up by high first-term enlisted non-EAS attrition. First-term non-EAS attrition increased markedly during FY92 and was still higher than desirable in FY93. Non-EAS attrition in the first term force was the main reason we finished below our target enlisted end strength for the last 2 years. As you know, recruiting and training today are expensive, and it takes time to recruit and train replacements for the FMF.

3. Our recruiters are doing a superb job in bringing recruits through the front door. However, because of mandatory reductions in our recruiting resources during the drawdown and the recruiters being required to recruit more than planned to maintain our end strength, the Marine Corps Recruiting Command is being stressed to the limit. Excessive first-term non-EAS losses have only added more accessions to the recruiting mission. Recruiting more Marines is not the solution to our present dilemma.

4. We all need to ensure that we're doing everything we can to preserve our precious manpower resources and to keep our personnel readiness high. Currently, the first-term force level is around 89 percent of requirement while the career force exceeds the requirement at 118 percent. Reenlisting more Marines is unfortunately not the answer. We must work even harder to ensure more first-term Marines remain until their EAS. I'm counting on your sound leadership to keep them serving and productive.

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5. There is no easy formula to balance our goal of a 174/42K Marine Corps against our individual leadership challenges, nor can we rely on the recruiters to do it alone. We must focus on the problem of non-EAS attrition at both the entry level and within the force. Both MCRD's, both SOI's, and the HQMC staff are exploring ways to reduce recruit training losses without compromising the quality of Marines. I ask that you aggressively address the problem from your perspective. I fully recognize that only the local commander can make the individual judgment calls that are best for both the Corps and the individual Marines. Separation authorities should review all non-EAS related separation policies, procedures, and records; look for specific categories that may have risen over time; and take appropriate action. Are there Marine Corps policies or procedures that need to be revised? If so, I need feedback to this Headquarters. This is a very important time for our Marine Corps, and we need to make sure that we maintain the manpower necessary to accomplish our mission. We all need to work together to ensure that we preserve the quality force that we have today.



C. E. MUNDY, JR.