



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

IN REPLY REFER TO:

CMC-MM
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WHITE LETTER NO. 22-92

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

Subj: RESPONSIBILITIES OF FITNESS REPORT REVIEWING OFFICERS

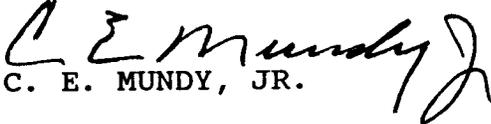
1. I am increasingly convinced that the Reviewing Officer for a fitness report has a critical role in ensuring the integrity of our Personnel Evaluation System. The Reviewing Officer provides detached and seasoned insight and can clarify inconsistencies and correct inaccuracies that are often found in fitness reports. Moreover, a Reviewing Officer's comments become especially important in one-on-one fitness reports because he or she can broaden the base for the evaluation and provide peer comparisons from a larger population. Comments from a Reviewing Officer carry special weight when a Marine is recommended for a commission, a special program, augmentation, or accelerated promotion. In the case of an adverse fitness report, thoughtful and analytical reviews become mandatory, especially when a disparity exists between the evaluation and the Marine's rebuttal.

2. Merely checking a block under Reviewing Officer's Certification adds very little to the value of a report, whether the report is laudatory or adverse. Reviewing Officers who write meaningful reviews are fulfilling their leadership responsibilities. These responsibilities include ensuring that reports are submitted in a timely manner as well as providing illuminating comments which characterize the Marine's performance as compared to that of others within the command and within the entire career experience of the Reviewing Officer. I realize that there are many instances where the Reviewing Officer will simply not know enough about the Marine being reported on to make useful comments. On such occasions, Reviewing Officers should solicit information from others to provide a framework against which to judge the Reporting Senior's evaluation.

3. Given the importance of the Reviewing Officer's comments, I am concerned that less than 25 percent of all fitness reports contain any substantive Reviewing Officers comments. The more senior the Reviewing Officer, the more likely it is that a meaningful review will be made. This, of course, demonstrates that it is incumbent upon our senior officers to encourage--and direct--that our younger officers, more junior in the chain of command, make descriptive and comparative comments as Reviewing Officers.

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4. Our Personnel Evaluation System is a good system which is built upon integrity and genuine concern for our Marines' welfare and the good of our Corps. But it can be made better if Reviewing Officers will shoulder the leadership responsibility we have given them by actively participating within the system. I strongly encourage each of you to "get the word out"--Reviewing Officers make a difference and have a critical role to play in fitness report preparation. This is a command responsibility, and it is a fundamental leadership responsibility. I expect every one of our officers who review fitness reports to be full participants in the evaluation process and not just passive observers.


C. E. MUNDY, JR.