



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
2 NAVY ANNEX
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IN REPLY REFER TO:

CMC-MM
18 May 2003

WHITE LETTER NO. 03-03

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

Subj: POLICY FOR RETURN AND REUNION OF MARINES

Ref: (a) MCO P1700.24B
(b) ALMAR 016/03
(c) ALMAR 32/03

1. Deployments are a constant reality for Marines, Sailors, and their family members. Return and reunion at the end of deployment creates demanding challenges for all, regardless of experience and length of service. This trend is evident by the historical increase in off-duty mishaps and fatalities involving Marines and their families. With deployments in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), the return of our Marines and their reunion with loved ones is marked by significant combat experience. This experience complicates the challenges Marines must face in the return and reunion process. To ease the transition from the battlefield to home, our returning Marines and their loved ones require adequate preparation and supportive services to ensure their welfare. It is imperative that all service members returning from OEF/OIF deployment receive comprehensive return and reunion services as outlined in the references. These same services should also be made available to the Marines' family members. Additionally, commanders will conduct an operational pause within one week of return for at least four hours to address risk management, off-duty mishaps, and safe driving briefs/discussions.

2. Unit commanders and officers-in-charge shall ensure that all service members receive Warrior Transition presentations, as outlined in reference (c), prior to returning from OEF/OIF). Chaplains and Medical Corps personnel should be on hand and available to observe the command briefs and to offer additional supportive services as needed. More serious cases shall be referred to mental health professionals for evaluation.

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All Installation Commanders and COMMARFORRES shall ensure that return and reunion presentations are readily available and marketed to family members (spouses, children, and significant others) aboard receiving installations and at appropriate Reserve locations as early as 30 days prior to the return of units.

3. Upon arrival at the home location, commanders shall ensure that Marines are aware of the supportive services available through the Chaplains, Medical Treatment Facilities (MTFs), and Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS). Commanders of MTFs shall ensure that mental health professionals are readily available for Marines.

4. Taking care of our own is one of our Corps' abiding core principles. As our Marines return from OIF and OEF, commanders must ensure that they are well prepared to successfully meet the challenges involved in returning from deployment and reuniting with their loved ones.


M. W. Hagee