



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

IN REPLY REFER TO:
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WHITE LETTER NO. 10-94

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

Subj: CAREER TRANSITION FOR GROUND OFFICERS

1. After more than a decade of experimenting with different programs designed to achieve the correct number of officers in each grade and MOS, we have yet to make any significant progress toward meeting this objective. Although we require a large number of junior officers with ground combat arms experience, the requirement for these officers to remain in their MOS diminishes significantly beyond the company grade level. While our primary goal is to augment and to promote the best qualified officers regardless of MOS, the high retention rates of combat arms officers has had a detrimental affect on the overall skill balance of the officer force.

2. Our current structure provides the grade and skill requirements vital to the accomplishment of our mission. Currently, 90 percent of our MOSs are unbalanced at the field grade level. While the ground combat arms MOSs have more than 150 percent of their required field grade officers, some ground support MOSs have less than 50 percent. Consequently, ground combat arms officers lose proficiency because they spend too much time out of their primary MOS while officers in short skills have little opportunity for career broadening assignments. A balanced officer force is absolutely necessary if we want to maximize combat readiness.

3. We need to establish a program that allows us to balance the skill requirements of the officer force. I have directed the implementation of a career transition program that will be used in conjunction with the augmentation process. ALMAR 095/94 explains the details of the program. This program is similar to the directed lateral move program that was used between 1984 and 1988 but was discontinued due to inconsistent management. Statistically, the majority of those officers who were affected by directed lateral moves have continued successfully with their careers. Those officers, who began their careers as ground combat arms officers, accepted commissions in the Regular Marine Corps with assignments to their new MOS. They have subsequently enjoyed a promotion rate significantly higher than the service average which indicates they are making a substantial contribution to the Marine Corps in their new skills.

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4. The officers selected for augmentation are among the best qualified based on their records of performance. I intend to provide those officers selected for career transition the opportunity to remain competitive. Officers selected for career transition will not be re-assigned to a billet in their new MOS until after formal schooling is completed. Formal training, followed by an assignment to a billet in their new MOS, will be provided as soon as possible. Implementation of the program will ensure these officers have ample time to establish credibility in their new MOS.

5. I want you to make your young ground officers aware of the important contribution they make to the Marine Corps, regardless of the MOS to which they may be assigned. We desire to continue augmenting and promoting the best qualified officers and we must also achieve an appropriate level of officer skill balance. Officers selected for career transition must be made to realize the importance of this objective, the contribution they will make to the Marine Corps, and also, the opportunity to continue with a rewarding career as a Marine. Furthermore, I expect each of you to provide positive guidance and encouragement to those officers selected for transition as they embark upon a new phase in their careers.


C. E. MUNDY, JR.