

15TH MEU



FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER

Colonel Scott D. Campbell

Marines and Families of the 15th MEU,

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a chance to enjoy the holidays, to reflect and relax with family and friends. It is important that we make the most of the few holidays and planned leave periods that exist between now and our pending deployment. We have entered that period in the life cycle of a MEU in which training and operational demands increase dramatically, that period when our focus turns to the intense preparation for our deployment in September.

Welcome to the Marines, Sailors, and families of BLT 3/5, HMM-364 (Rien), CLB-15, and all of the Detachments that have recently joined the 15th MEU "Bullrush" Team. I look forward to meeting each of you. Life with 15th MEU will be demanding for both our Marines and our families. I am acutely aware of the demands and stress of a MEU work-up and ensuing deployment. I, along with my Command Team and Family Readiness Officer, will do everything to minimize the stress, prepare and support

our families, and add an element of fun whenever possible.

The 15th MEU is fortunate to have Ms. Becky Roman as our Family Readiness Officer (FRO). Becky brings a wealth of experience and boundless energy to the 15th MEU. She, along with the FROs from the 3/5, HMM-364, and CLB-15 are already in the process of developing our pre-deployment family preparation plans. Please take the time to meet Becky, make sure you're on her email list, and follow 15th MEU through this challenging work-up period on our website or Facebook page. Throughout the coming months, as our Marines train and prepare for deployment, our families must also prepare. Whether you are veterans of previous deployments or this is your first, family preparation is essential to the health and success of the greater 15th MEU team. I encourage all of our 15th MEU families to participate in the programs that our FROs put together. If you have recommendations or special requests, please pass them to Becky or any member of the Command Team.



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Our schedule is pretty firm. We are planning on executing a series of major training evolutions that involve the whole MEU and will require your Marine or Sailor to spend extended periods of time aboard ship or in the field. Please keep in mind that there are many other smaller training evolutions that may involve your loved one:

05 March – 16 March: Rapid Response Planning Process Training

2 April -12 April: MEUEX (MEU Integration Training)

31 May – 11 June: PMINT (Navy-Marine Integration Training)

16 July – 3 August: COMPTUEX (Composite MEU Underway Training)

15 August – 28 August: CERTEX (Final MEU Certification)

At present we're looking to schedule block leave during late June through early July and another window from the end of August through early September. As soon as block leave dates are set, we will get the word out so that our families can finalize their leave plans.

I am extremely proud to be a part of the Bullrush family and look forward to building a great team and doing great things during our upcoming deployment. I am committed to the health and happiness of families, and I look forward to meeting with you in the near future. Until then,

Semper Fidelis

S. D. Campbell

Bullrush History

-1989: Assisted with relief efforts in San Francisco following the 6.9 Loma Prieta Earthquake.

-2003: Entered Iraq; secured An Nasiriyah and conducted supporting attack during the rescue of POW Jessica Lynch.

REQUIRED TRAINING	MEUEX	PMINT	COMPTUEX	CERTEX
	Series of land-based exercises. First training with all Major Subordinate Elements (MSE's).	First of 3 at-sea training periods designed for Navy and Marines to begin working together.	At-sea training furthering MEU capabilities to execute various potential missions.	Final certification designating the 15th MEU as Special Operations Capable.

SERGEANT MAJOR SAYS

SgtMaj John W. Scott



Greetings to the Families, Friends and Loved Ones of BULLRUSH!

I hope this message finds you well. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to those I have yet to meet. My name is John Scott, and I have been given the tremendous honor and privilege of being the new sergeant major of 15th MEU. The legacy of BULLRUSH is one of true professionalism and warfighting excellence. It is clear that your Marines and sailors are eager to take on any and all challenges that lie ahead of us.

As we began our pre-deployment training cycle, I encourage you all to take advantage of this time to ensure that you are preparing adequately for the upcoming deployment. Our Family Readiness Officer, Ms. Rebecca M. Roman, and her team of volunteers, can provide any support you may require. Please do not hesitate to contact her with any concerns or if you need assistance. Additionally, Ms. Roman will provide

unique volunteer opportunities to help you pass the time while your Marine or Sailor is deployed. Lastly, for our married E5s and below, the FRO will be offering a mini-LINKS session on 14 March from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. This workshop will focus on MEU money and the emotional deployment cycle. Spouses are encouraged to attend with their Marines. Childcare is provided.

On a final note, I would like to thank Sgt. Maj. Rick Cunningham and his family for 30 years of service and sacrifice to our country and Corps. He was a source of wise counsel, consummate professional, leader and example for those he came in contact with. The Marines and Sailors of 15th MEU are better men and women through his efforts. Fair winds and following seas my friend, we sincerely thank you.

Semper Fidelis

Sgt. Maj. John W. Scott



Exercise
Iron Fist



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

LCDR David Dinkins

What About Today?

More than a hundred years ago, Ambrose Bierce's *The Devil's Dictionary* provided the following definition for the word day, "DAY, n. [noun] A period of twenty-four hours, mostly misspent..." I doubt I'm the only one who at the close of a day or end of a week, said to myself, "Where did the time go?" or "Wow, that's four hours of my life I won't get back."

During these days of pre-deployment training, I challenge you to be intentional with how you spend your days. Each day is a precious and passing opportunity to invest in those things that are most important to you and your loved ones, a chance to spend your time in ways that are constructive and rich in meaning.

I challenge you to be intentional each and every day. Turn off the autopilot and take the helm. Rescue your time from anything that could rob you of life's very best experiences. How? Turn off the television and or computer, say "no" to people and events that under-utilize your time, let voice mail answer your unimportant calls, and make plans to make the most of your days.

Some suggestions- Take a long walk on the beach with your family or closest friends. If you have kids walk them to a local park and play. Go on a picnic with your spouse or significant other. Prepare a candlelit dinner for your spouse. If your loved ones are geographically distant, call them on Saturday mornings or write them a weekly letter. Sit down with your loved ones regularly, daily is best, for a shared meal and fellowship. Make time to practice your faith. Go to the gym. Have a tea party with your daughter. Play ball with your son. Read a good book. Read to your kids at bedtime. Be creative and spend your days doing those things that will yield lasting mental, physical, relational, and spiritual dividends. Now is the time to make memories and build resilience.

Today, make your definition of a day a period of twenty-four hours, time wonderfully well spent.

Seize the day,

Chaplain Dave Dinkins



THE FRO KNOWS

REBECCA M. ROMAN



What's your SASS Factor?

Welcome service members and families to the 15th MEU! As the Commanding Officer explained, our upcoming training and deployment schedule is going to be a demanding one due to the complexities of the MEU's mission. My goal is to help prepare each of you for the challenges this may impose.

In order to reach our goal of optimal family readiness, we must first know where we are currently, as individuals and as a unit. So I ask, "What is your SASS Factor"?

In my opinion, Family Readiness assessment includes three realms that must be satisfied for greater success. First we must each have a system of **S**upport. While the Marines are at sea, there will be limited communication capabilities (i.e. personal laptops will have not internet on ship). Having people around who you can count on is critical. Now is the time to start defining the people in your life who you can count on for emotional support during the training and deployment, whether it is a neighbor, mentor, family member, or other spouses here at the MEU. Give yourself this time to join a play group, reading club, church, gym, etc. Keeping busy and having a support system will ease the stress, scheduling issues, and emotional cycle related to separation from your loved one.

Second to the success of preparing for and going through a deployment is your **A**ttitude. While separation from a loved one is not ideal, deployments are filled with many great opportunities. Individuals can take the time for personal growth, try a new hobby, further their education, increase personal communication skills, get involved with their community, and create special memories with children and other loved ones. Focusing on seizing the time that you are allotted with your loved one is also important as Chaplain

Dinkins expressed. When facing challenges that may come up, it is your positive support system that can help you get back on track. There are also many resources from Military One Source counselors to Family Advocacy to our own Chaplain who can provide psychological, emotional, and spiritual services to help you if you get down.

Third, family readiness requires learned **S**kill **S**ets. Separation from loved ones requires patience, but above all, solid communication skills. CREDO retreats and seminars are run by Chaplains and focus on communication between couples. FOCUS Project provides group workshops and training for learning to communicate about your feelings and issues related to the deployment cycle. The 15th MEU will also be offering a short marriage workshop in the coming months, so be on the lookout for follow-up details. Financial planning is another skill set that will help during the deployment. Free financial advisors and Navy Marine Corps Relief Society offer budgeting and investment guidance. Lastly, general knowledge about what to expect in the Marine Corps lifestyle is imperative. Basics from reading pay statements to deployment cycles to USMC history is offered through mentor-lead workshops at LINKS (Lifestyle, Insight, Networking, Knowledge, Skills). These resources can be found at www.MCCSCP.com or you can contact me or your FRO with more questions.

So when I ask, "What is your SASS Factor?" consider where your system of Support, Attitude, and Skill Sets are currently, and where you would like them to be. Over the coming months, I will be working with the FROs of the other subordinate elements to help increase your readiness with resources, workshops, and morale events. Please let your FROs know how she/he can help.

Regards,
Rebecca (Becky) Roman
760-429-5385
rebebecca.roman@usmc.mil

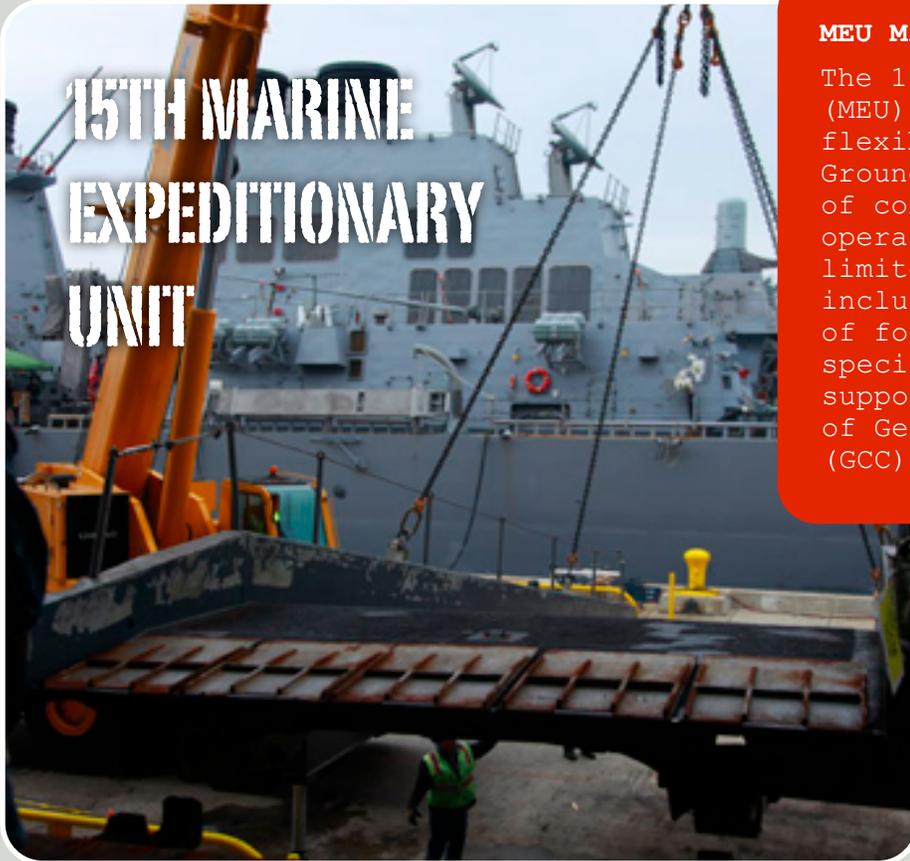
Command Element Events

14 March: Mini-LINKS for Marines/Couples, focusing on MEU pay, emotional deployment cycle.

21 March: Coffee with the FRO

3 May: Marriage Enrichment (with MSE's)

15TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT



MEU Mission

The 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) provides a forward deployed, flexible sea-based Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) capable of conducting amphibious operations, crisis response and limited contingency operations, to include enabling the introduction of follow-on forces and designated special operations, in order to support the theater requirements of Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCC).



News & Communication

Official communication between the Command and the families is critical for understanding, preparing, and overcoming the unique challenges associated with a MEU deployment. Your Family Readiness Officer listed on the next page is your primary source for official news and understanding. Whether you hear a rumor, are looking for a resource to help your family, or are seeking opportunities to get involved, please contact your FRO directly.

The number one tool for official communication is www.Emarine.org. Each subordinate element has its own site, but the information provided is uniform. Please ensure both the Marine/Sailor and the family members are individually subscribed to your unit's eMarine page.

FROs will also send out emails, bulletins, and other information as necessary. Do not be surprised to see emails

forwarded from the Command Element to subordinate elements. Many of our resources and events will be held jointly for everyone to attend.

Lastly, the internet also has a few sites providing information. The 15th MEU's official web page is www.i-mef.usmc.mil/external/15thmeu/. Our Public Affairs Office (PAO) also run a Facebook page with amazing official news stories and photographs at <https://www.facebook.com/15thMarineExpeditionaryUnit>. I run a 15th MEU Family Readiness Facebook page with information on events, resources, and more at www.facebook.com/familyreadiness15thMEU. The Facebook for 3/5 is <http://www.facebook.com/3rdBattalion5thMarines>. Please check with your own FRO for other sites.

Operational Security (OPSEC)

Pieces of Unclassified information when placed together can create a threat to the safety of the Marines, their Mission, and even their families. Al Qaeda has given instruction to target military families in order to plan attacks on military members and civilians. Please take extra care and limit photos and information about the Marines/Sailors and their location or training/deployment schedule that you place on social networking sites and other websites. Only EMarine is a SECURED site.

MEU STRUCTURE

BREAKDOWN

The MEU, commanded by a Marine Colonel (currently Col. Scott D. Campbell), is the smallest of the MAGTFs and is comprised of about 2,200 Marines and sailors. The MEU's major elements are the Command Element (CE), the Ground Combat Element (GCE), the Aviation Combat Element (ACE), and the Logistics Combat Element (LCE).

The Command Element (CE)

The CE is comprised of the Commanding Officer and supporting staff -- about 200 Marines and Sailors. It provides the command and coordination essential for effective planning and execution of operations and synchronizes the actions of each element within the MEU.

The Command Element contains permanent and temporary personnel. Temporary Personnel come from other units for the training and deployment. Current parent units include 2nd Radio Battalion, etc.

The S1 provides legal and administrative support. The S2 provides intelligence. The S3 provides training. The S4 provides logistical support. The S6 provides communication/technology support.

*Currently the Command Element FRO is Rebecca Roman. rebecca.roman@usmc.mil. 760-429-5385.

Ground Combat Element (GCE)- Formerly known as the Battalion Landing Team (BLT)

The GCE is comprised of about 1,200 Marines & Sailors and is built around an infantry battalion that provides the over-land combat power for the MEU. Assets inherent within the standard infantry battalion include medium and heavy machine guns, mortars, combined anti-armor teams (CAAT) and scout snipers. While assigned to the MEU, the unit, designated 'Battalion Landing Team', is reinforced with light armored reconnaissance vehicles (LAV), tanks, artillery, combat engineers and assault amphibian vehicles (AAV).

*Currently our BLT is 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines (3/5). Their Family Readiness Officer is Kim Reese. kimberly.reese@usmc.mil. 760-763-1260.

Aviation Combat Element (ACE)

The ACE is a composite squadron that provides the MEU medium to heavy lift capability, assault support and close air support (CAS). Although the aviation element carries the

name of the Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron assigned to the MEU, its assets include CH-46E Sea Knight medium lift helicopters, CH-53E Super Stallion heavy lift helicopters, AH-1W Super Cobra helicopter gunships, UH-1N Huey utility helicopters and AV-8B Harrier jump jets. With a force strength of approximately 500, the ACE includes air traffic control, aircraft maintenance/support and aviation logistics/supply capabilities.

*Currently the ACE is HMM-364. Their Family Readiness Officer is Holly Lane. holly.lane@usmc.mil. 760-763-1465.

Logistics Combat Element (LCE)

About 300 Marines and Sailors of the LCE provide combat support such as supply, maintenance, transportation, explosive ordnance disposal, military police, water production and distribution, engineering, medical and dental services, fuel storage and distribution, and other services to the deployed MEU. The LCE gives the MEU the ability to support itself for 15 days in austere expeditionary environments.

Marines and Sailors of the MEU are embarked aboard three amphibious ships, designated as an Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON) commanded by a Navy Captain, who bears the title of Commodore. Joined together, the MEU and PHIBRON are designated as an Amphibious Ready Group (ARG). Together, with its Navy brethren, the MEU serves as the Nation's forward deployed, quick response team, capable of accomplishing numerous missions around the globe.

The size and composition of the MEU makes it well suited for amphibious operations; security operations; noncombatant operations or civilians threatened by, or suffering from, violence; and service as mobile training teams. The MEU is an expeditionary force in nature, able to operate in foreign lands without U.S. bases and facilities. It is naval in character, useful in conventional operations in the air and ashore, and is able to operate with U.S. fleets around the world. The MEUs combined arms team bears substantial force and is capable of a high degree of tactical mobility while delivering significant, sustained firepower within an objective area.

*Currently our LCE is Combat Logistics Battalion 15 (CLB 15). Their Family Readiness Officer is Clint Green. clint.e.green@usmc.mil. 760-763-4016.