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UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

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CHAP
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15TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT ORDER 1700.2

From: Commanding Officer, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit
To: Distribution List

Subj: STANDING OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP) FOR SUICIDE
PREVENTION PROGRAM WITHIN THE 15th MARINE EXPEDITIONARY
UNIT (MEU)

Ref: (a) MCO P1700.24B
(b) MARADMIN 0134/09
(c) MCO 3040.4E
(d) MCIWESTO 1700.2

1. Situation. Establish the SOP for the Suicide Prevention program within the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit.
2. Mission. This SOP addresses procedural items that are specific to the conduct of the Suicide Prevention Program within the 15th MEU as required by references (a), (b), (c) and (d).
3. Execution. Suicide prevention in 15th MEU will be conducted per the references and this SOP.
4. Certification. Reviewed and approved this date.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. A. Ross".

S. A. ROSS
By Direction

SOP FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM

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SOP FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM

CHAPTER 1

MISSION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1000. GENERAL. Per reference (a), the Commanding Officer, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (15th MEU) establishes and sustains the Suicide Prevention Program within the MEU. Per reference (a) the 15th MEU Chaplain serves on the Commanding Officer's special staff to develop and implement the Suicide Prevention Program, and to provide professional advice and counsel on this issue per reference (c).

1001. MISSION. The mission for the 15th MEU Suicide Prevention Program is to develop and implement annual training for all 15th MEU personnel, to provide supervision and support if requested by Major Subordinate Elements (MSE's) attached to the MEU, and to provide Commanding Officer and MEU staff advisory on suicide prevention, intervention, and after-care action impacting on the Unit and its operations, family readiness, troop morale, and troop well-being.

1002. POLICY. Good leadership is the foundation to a good suicide prevention program. Officers and supervisors must work to build supportive work environments that encourage distressed individuals to seek the help required without negative repercussions. To this end, leaders at every level must make the effort to understand the people in their unit and to get to know them on a personal level. It is essential to ask the tough questions about life problems, suicidal ideation, excessive alcohol use, and any other signs of instability and self-destructive behavior. Leaders should publicly encourage their Marines and Sailors to seek professional help and then remain actively involved with them until problems are resolved. Every Marine and Sailor should know the suicide warning signs, their responsibility to intervene, and how to access the base's helping resources. Additionally, leaders should recognize when they, themselves, need help and get it.

1003. COMMAND RESPONSIBILITY. To carry out this policy, commanders are responsible to implement and maintain a Suicide Prevention Program as required by reference (a). This includes ensuring that every member of the unit attends annual training regardless of when individuals join the 15th MEU. If a suicide

or attempted suicide occurs within the unit, it is appropriate for the command to support and direct survivors, whether unit members or family members dealing with grief, to professionals as detailed in reference (c).

1004. SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM OFFICER RESPONSIBILITY. As indicated in references (a) and (b), the Suicide Prevention Training Officer shall acquire the latest training materials mandated by the HQMC, and as appropriate utilize other suicide prevention training as prepared by the US Navy Chaplain Corps, US Navy Bureau of Medicine, other branches of the US military, or other resources that effectively support the intervention and prevention of suicide. The Suicide Prevention Officer shall be afforded the time to attend workshops, seminars, and other higher level training to increase his/her expertise in the area of suicide prevention.

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CHAPTER 2

ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT

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CHAPTER 2

ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENTS

2000. 15th MEU SUICIDE PREVENTION OFFICER. The 15th MEU Command Element Suicide Prevention Officer is the Commanding Officer's appointed officer in charge of suicide prevention training, administratively placed under the Executive Officer, but responsible to the CO for suicide prevention programs in the unit. The appointee will coordinate all Suicide prevention training as described in reference (a), the following specific duties apply:

1. Initiate, implement and coordinate suicide prevention objectives within the 15th MEU.
2. Coordinate with S-3 Training to ensure that annual training is scheduled on and that attendance is documented in each Marine's training record. Schedule make-up sessions for those missed annual training or who joined the unit since the most recent session.

2001. S-3 TRAINING. The S-3 Training Officer shall consult with the Suicide Prevention Training Officer to schedule annual training and make-up sessions as needed, seek out and reserve adequate facilities that ensure uninterrupted training time, arrange with S-6 for any required audio and visual equipment not in place, and keep track of those who attend recording this training in the members' training records.

2002. S-6 COMMUNICATIONS. The S-6 shall provide, set-up, and operate any audio or visual equipment as may be required for suicide prevention training in the 15th MEU Command Element.

2003. ALL LEADERS IN 15TH MEU. All leaders regardless of rank or pay grade, whether a supervisor, section head, or OIC, shall exercise effective suicide prevention on a daily basis by employing the principles of building trust, helping, knowing, and caring about the personnel they lead. Each leader shall model healthy self-care and take action to further a work environment that publicly encourages and fully expects members to get the help they need. All leaders, as appropriate and with respect to a member's right to privacy, will engage the member's workplace peers to support and reengage that member who has sought professional help.

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CHAPTER 3

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT

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CHAPTER 3

LOGISTICS SUPPORT

4000. GENERAL. Per reference (a), commanders and commanding officers are directly responsible for the logistical support of the Suicide Prevention Program.

4001. Suicide Prevention Materials shall be acquired with appropriated funds and may include videos, booklets, posters, and brochures and other training material mandated by the USMC.

4002. Where necessary, S-3 shall secure an appropriate training venue and shall coordinate with S-6, as necessary, to provide audio and visual equipment as required by the Suicide Prevention Training Officer.

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CHAPTER 4

TRAINING

5000. TRAINING CONCEPT. In accordance with reference (a), the Commanding Officer shall ensure that all suicide prevention training is conducted in accordance with a Training and Readiness collective standard. All training events shall directly support the Mission Essential Task List (METL) and indirectly support the unit METL.

5001. TRAINING STANDARDS. Every 15th MEU member will be trained to both detect and intervene wherever signs of self-destructive behavior, suicidal ideations, or actual suicide attempts exist. Each unit member shall be ready to briefly describe the signs of possible suicidal tendencies and the three steps to intervention: Act, Care, Escort. Both resources and healthy behavior will be identified. Stressing that the Marine Corps takes care of their own, leaders will be instructed to create a work environment that encourages members to get the help they require. Training will cover the following:

1. Signs that demand action and care include self-defeating behavior, low self-esteem, legal problems, financial or relationship issues, or anything that is out of the norm for that individual. A combination of such stressors may lead to: decreased productivity, absenteeism, tardiness, missed deadlines, faulty decisions, carelessness and accidents, recklessness, attempts at criminal behavior, increased conflict, preoccupations, self-imposed ostracism, alcohol abuse, gambling, and lower morale.
2. Suicidal ideations include expressions spoken or written of hopelessness or loss of purpose, episodes of rage where the anger is directed at the self, expressions of wanting pain to end, to never wake up, admitting conflicting thoughts on harming one's self, or actual statements of intention to kill one's self.
3. Suicide attempt is any gesture or action that could lead to the death of the individual, whether or not the plan was viable, such as ingesting pills, cutting one's self, placing electrical objects near a shower, concealing ammunition for a weapon, or setting in motion a chain of events that could be deadly.

4. Each member of the 15th MEU is responsible to respond to all signs, ideations, and suicide attempts. A successful suicide prevention program happens every day by employing healthy habits and encouraging others to do the same: promoting productive coping & problem solving skills, flexibility in thinking, sense of personal control, optimistic outlook, belief that asking for help is okay, willingness to talk about problems, willingness to seek help, access to helping resources, healthy relationships, sense of belonging to a group, and good self care.

5. Escorting means getting an individual the best help for them to include: family, friends, Chain of Command, Chaplains, Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS) counselors, Mental Health Clinic, Substance Abuse Program, local community resources, or Military OneSource.

5002. TRAINING METHODS. Training will utilize media as the Suicide Prevention Training Officer, with the approval of the Executive Officer, deems appropriate to present the suicide prevention in the most positive, effective, and memorable way, to include the latest training guides, film clips, and guest speakers from resources detailed in Appendix (A).

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APPENDIX A

Additional Resources and Websites

USMC Suicide Prevention:

www.usmc-mccs.org/suicideprevent/
WWW.TECOM.USMC.MIL

Navy Suicide Prevention

<http://www.npc.navy.mil/CommandSupport/SuicidePrevention>
www.suicide.navy.mil
www.nmcphc.med.navy.mil/hp/suicide/

Military OneSource www.militaryonesource.com

TriCare Mental Health www.tricare.mil/mybenefit/ProfileFilter.do

www.militarymentalhealth.org (Funded by DOD Office of Health Affairs)
 - Provides anonymous online mental health screenings

Intervention Hotlines

OPNAV N135 Behavioral Health	(901) 874 6613
Military Onesource	(800) 342 9647
National Suicide Prevention Helpline	(800) 273 TALK
National Hopeline Network	(800) SUICIDE

Materials

Navy Logistics Library <http://nll.navsup.navy.mil>

Post-vention Resources

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) www.taps.org
 (800) 959 TAPS

General Prevention Resources

American Association of Suicidology www.suicidology.org/index.cfm

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention www.afsp.org

Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/suifacts.htm

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

www.nimh.gov/suicideprevention/suicidefaq.cfm

Real Men, Real Depression

www.menanddepression.nimh.nih.gov

Suicide Prevention Resource Center

www.sprc.org