
The Director's Cut

DivPA's Monthly Newsletter to the Marine Corps' PA Community

From the Director:

Fellow Marines –

This past week, I asked the staff here at Division of Public Affairs to join me at the Pentagon Memorial on the occasion of Osama Bin Laden's demise to reflect on the previous ten years.

Many of you were serving on active duty on that fateful day, 11 September 2001, when this new era of service began. A large group from our PA family was assembled at Palm Springs, Calif., for the annual Combat Correspondents and PA Leaders Conference. Many of you were serving at duty stations around the Marine Corps to include here at the Pentagon when it was attacked. And others were in school, years away from joining the Corps. But no matter where you were, we were all impacted by 11 September 2001. All of our lives were shaped and continue to be shaped by this event.

So, now we enter into a new era, a new phase in this long war. While many things are yet to be known, one thing is certain; your vital service is still in great need to the Marine Corps. There is nothing more important than "telling the Marine Corps story" right now. Let's all continue to honor our friends and colleagues that didn't make it back and start each day with a full 30-inch step toward the many challenges that still face us.

I could not be any prouder of your performance to date.

PA Marines continue to be recognized for taking that full step and sharing the courage of our Marines. I would like to take a moment to congratulate our Thomas Jefferson Award winners:

Tabloid Format Newspaper: Okinawa Marine

Web-based Publication: The Blue Diamond, 1st Marine Division

Commentary: LCpl Tyler Bolken, MCAS Cherry Point

Outstanding Flagship Publication: Marines Magazine

Outstanding New Writer: LCpl Reece Lodder, MCB Hawaii

Looking ahead, our PA community has several key initiatives coming up including our participation in Fleet Week NY and execution of our own Marine Week St. Louis. Also, the Public Affairs Conference in New Orleans later this year will be another step in professionally developing our force of Marines from private through colonel. I look forward to seeing you all there. Keep up the great work.

Semper Fidelis!

Col Bryan Salas

Plans:

San Diego State University: If you are interested in attending the Special Education Program at SDSU during the 2012-2013 school year, please contact [Capt Kevin Schultz](#) to discuss application requirements. MMOA hasn't released this year's MARADMIN soliciting applications yet, but last year's board required packages to be submitted by 30 June. There are several steps applicants need to take to submit a complete package, so please contact Capt Schultz as soon as possible for further guidance or if you have any questions. 1st Lieutenants – Majors are eligible for SEP.

SDSU's nationally recognized Public Relations master's degree program provides advance study in strategic planning, management by objectives, communication theory, research, assessment and evaluation. The intensive 10-month program is a "mainstreamed" version of the normal two-year master's degree program. Upon graduation, students receive a master's degree in Mass Communication and Media Studies from SDSU's School of Journalism and Media Studies. For more information, visit: http://jms.sdsu.edu/study_areas/graduate_study/PAO_program.html.

2011 PA Leadership and PA Professional Development Conferences: This year's conference planning is well underway and will be focused on education and professional development, much like civilian conferences hosted by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). To enhance learning and foster discussion among officers and SNCOs, we'll break into smaller groups. Although the schedule is still being confirmed, we plan on having a full day focused on communication planning and the Marine Corps Planning Process (MCP). We also hope to touch upon topics such as the role of the PA practitioner, the future of communication, research, assessment, what is a "narrative," OPFOR case studies, promotion boards, and more. There also will be a separate training track for our junior enlisted Marines. For details on registration and hotel information, please refer to [MARADMIN 180-11](#). Call [GySgt Brenda Varnadore](#) at 703-692-1879 with any questions.

DINFOS Training Portal: DINFOS recently added a "[DINFOS Training Portal](#)" link to the DINFOS website. The portal includes training modules available for past, present and future students.

First Term Alignment Plan (FTAP): Marines with End of Active Service dates between 1 October 11 through 30 September 2012, and on their first contracts, should begin their re-enlistment packages as soon as possible. Last year, we became a Fast Filling MOS (FFM), and many Marines lost the opportunity to re-enlist because the boatspaces were gone before their packages were done. This year, we anticipate the Marines to be boarded competitively for the allocations. Please ensure your Marines are afforded the opportunity to have their packages to HQMC by 1 July. Please see amplifying guidance in [MARADMIN 273-11](#).

NAVMC 3500.9A Public Affairs Training and Readiness Manual: The manual is now available on the TECOM website. This updated manual is based on our updated core competencies. Please ensure we are training our Marines to the standard.

Have Free Time? Or can you make time? Please re-read the [PA Roadmap 2025](#) and think about how you can make big or small changes today to move us in the direction set out in this vision.

Plans Branch POCs: Maj Carrie Batson, Capt Al Eskalis, Capt Kevin Schultz, and GySgt Brenda Varnadore. Have any questions about your career? School seats? How we're evolving the PA community when it comes to Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, and Facilities (DOTMLPF)? Contact us at 703-614-1494.

COMREL:

We just hosted a very successful **Veterans Service Organization (VSO) Conference**, here at the Pentagon, in order to keep the VSOs informed about the current state of Marines and their families. We briefed them on the Wounded Warrior Regiment and talked with them about what their organizations could do in support of the Corps. This event was attended by more than 20 national VSOs, to include the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The event was also attended by Marine Corps VSOs, such as the Marine Corps League, the Marine Corps Association, and the Women Marines Association. The Commandant stopped by to thank them for their service and support.

Marine Week St. Louis is just around the corner and shaping operations have begun. If you have a minute, exactly one minute, you can take a look at the [Marine Week teaser](#) that was created by Sgt Alvaro Aro, Media and PA representative for 9th Marine Corps District, Recruiting Station St. Louis. The Final Planning Conference for Marine Week St. Louis took place the first week of May. At the FPC, the complete schedule of Marine Week events was finalized and will be posted to the [Marine Week St. Louis website](#) later this month. Marine Week St. Louis will take place 20-26 June. If you have any questions or comments, please contact [LtCol Pete Conlan](#) or [Jeanette Casselano](#) at 703-614-1034.

The first **Marine Corps Executive Forum (MCEF)** took place on 6 May, hosted by BGen David Berger (HQMC, PP&O), and involved approximately 15 guests and media from the St. Louis, Mo. region. This was the first of four for the year. MCEF participants visited the Pentagon to meet with senior Marine Corps leadership, then traveled to Quantico, Va. Guests had the opportunity to experience Marine Corps aviation first-hand, fire weapons systems, observe or participate in hands-on demonstrations and tour various locations in and around the Washington D.C. area with significant Marine Corps history. The forum has been expanded to include not only business executives, but community leaders such as members of academia, athletics, clergy, etc., to include a much more diverse audience. If you would like to nominate someone to attend [MCEF](#) this year, please contact [Naomi Dorren](#) at 703-614-1034.

Community Relations received 54 nominations for this year's **Navy League Sea Service Awards** program on the 15 April deadline. Thanks to all of the commands who submitted nominations. Deadlines for the remaining Veteran Services Awards are rapidly approaching; The **American Legion Spirit of Service award** is due 1 June and the **Marine Corps League Enlisted Awards** deadline is 17 June. See MARADMINs [041-11](#) and [39-11](#) for more information.

Lastly, we are honored to have the **MARFORPAC band in China** for the first week of May to provide musical support for the 2011 Shanghai Spring International Music Festival. PA support has been embedded with them and we look forward to hearing about this rare experience and great opportunity to develop relationships with the military and people of China.

DMA:

Social Media: The Corps' online presence continues to grow. Collectively, after accounting for all of your social media sites, the site maintained by Recruiting Command, and the Corps' main flagship property at Facebook.com/Marines, our Corps is vastly in the lead. The combined base of Marine-managed sites is approaching three million fans.

It's not all about size, though. The interactions and feedback of all those fans add up - increasing the effectiveness of public affairs campaigns in the process. To date, Facebook has delivered more than 320 million post views from the Corps' main fan site at Facebook.com/Marines. Telling the Corps' story, through the power of all the tools in our kit.

To keep the social engine running its best, please keep sending your stories, links, ideas and connections to your unit and PA interests to [GySgt Robert Piper](#) (703-602-8096).

Personal Protection: A new awareness campaign will soon launch, aimed at helping our Marines and family members better understand the uses of and precautions for social networking. The first step will be an online survey link that establishes a baseline. So, in case anyone asks, the survey about Marine Corps social media usage they might receive is indeed legit.

Soon to follow the survey is the release of the Marine Corps Social Media Handbook. As part of the Marine Corps' Information Protection Working Group, DMA Marines produced the handbook to deliver a broad overview to leaders, social media staff, family members and individual Marines on tips and points to keep in mind when using the new communication medium. Distribution is scheduled through print and online outlets during May.

Marines Magazine: Once again, the Marine Corps captured the title of best magazine in the DoD. For the fourth time, Marines magazine has the honor of claiming the Thomas Jefferson Award for Outstanding Flagship Publication. Thanks to all who contributed to the publication with your award winning photography, variety of stories, and information about the tough and interesting work of our Marines.

We're not finished yet. We still desperately need even more. Send [GySgt Robert Piper](#) your features, short stories, hard corps images, sports photography and player highlights, and tales of heroism and dedication. With seven issues per year, plus our new iPad app, we have many opportunities to showcase your content to a wide spread audience.

III MEF/MCBJ

The momentum from March carried into April as the first week found the shop only half staffed and with twice the workload. As week two rolled around, our Marines started returning from Operation Tomodachi.

Video and print footage was distributed to the III MEF/MCBJ Facebook, Flickr, and YouTube websites along with Leatherneck, Reuters, Corbis, AP and Newsweek. And JTF-505 Facebook page was established and maintained to support distribution efforts of III MEF/MCBJ CPAO teams deployed throughout the AO. Only 1stLt Norton remains in mainland Japan providing PA support for repositioning/redeployments.

LCpl Ward and Cpl Brown returned from the Philippines late April at the completion of Exercise Balikatan 2011. Mid April, Cpl Brackin headed to Korea to support Korean Incremental Training Program 2011. GySgt Drafton, Cpl Baez and LCpl Hernandez deployed 25 April to Bangladesh to provide PA support for the Operation Sea Angel commemoration. They will put together video pieces of the Marine Security Guards located there, to be used for hometown news releases, as well as stories on the life of a MSG. LCpl Welch will remain with the 31st MEU until the completion of Talisman Saber late this summer.

We bid farewell to Mr. Ard, our deputy, who accepted an IA billet and is currently deployed in support of OEF as a Navy Chief until next spring. The Media Section bid fair winds and following seas to 1stLt Burke, moving from 3rd MarDiv to 26th MEU as the MEU PAO. Press bid farewell to Cpl Flynn who is now back in the civilian sector, and Cpl Nava who transferred to Parris Island.

We welcomed home Cpl Zellner, of III MEF, from a six-month deployment to Afghanistan with Combat Logistics Battalion 3 in support of OEF.

Plans section is also busy coordinating the deployment of personnel and working support of NOLES, LF CARAT and the Australia Skills at Arms Meet all beginning in May. Constantly communicating with MARFORPAC, III MEF G-3 and the 31st MEU has wielded great results in coverage of the Asia-Pacific region!

LCpl Jovane Holland and LCpl Abigail Wharton are not in the witness protection program, but recently married and now are LCpl Jovane Henry and Cpl Abigail Brown.

Finally the Media Section welcomed Sayuri Toyoda as the new Media Relations Specialist.