COMMANDER'S 2013 STATEMENT ON SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Sexual assault is a crime. As the Commander of Marine Corps Installations Command, I will not tolerate sexual assault or sexual harassment nor will not tolerate those who do. Sexual assault is defined as intentional sexual contact, characterized by the use of force, physical threat of force or abuse of authority; or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Sexual assault is not restricted to any gender, race, or age. I expect all members of the command to become familiar with Marine Corps Order 1752.5b. Specifically, I want all of you to be familiar with identifying, reporting and addressing sexual assault. Ignoring sexual assault is damaging to the victim, the unit and the Marine Corps.

In the event of a sexual assault, victims have the option of making Restricted (confidential) or Unrestricted reports. Restricted reports allow victims to receive services and medical care anonymously and confidentially through Uniformed Victim Advocates (UVA), Victim Advocates (VA) with Marine & Family Services' Family Advocacy Program (FAP), Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARC) and health service providers. These professionals are available 24 hours a day, are trained to assist victims in dealing with the command, law enforcement, and medical personnel and can advise victims further of their reporting options. Unrestricted reports made to members of the command, law enforcement and other DoD employees will be used for formal investigations.

At all times victims of sexual assault will be treated with dignity and respect. Commanders will ensure victims receive appropriate legal, medical, emotional, psychological and social services support—all without prejudice or fear of reprisal.

Furthermore, I expect that all commanders and their Senior Enlisted Advisors will set a command climate that makes every Marine and Sailor feel like a valued member of the organization, and where being treated with dignity and respect is the norm and never the exception. This command climate will be one where leaders of all ranks are mentored and taught the requisite leadership, interpersonal, and confidence skills to detect the signs of sexual assault. This command climate will be one that fosters the fair, unbiased and dignified treatment of victims of sexual assault. This command climate will be one where Marines and Sailors who have been victims of these crimes will not think twice about reporting them for fear of being ignored, ostracized or re-victimized by those who are their most important source of support—members of their own unit and their leaders.

My intent is clear: Every member of Marine Corps Installations Command must understand that their duty is to safely intervene by identifying and stopping behaviors that may lead to sexual assault. Being a passive bystander is not an option and will not be tolerated. Bystanders to potential assaults must take decisive action to prevent these incidents from occurring. To do otherwise is the polar opposite to what we stand for. I am confident that all in our command will act as expected, with Honor, Courage and Commitment towards our fellow Marines, Sailors and civilian Marines.

Semper Fidelis,

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