Commanding General's Policy on Safety

Safety and the preservation of our Force while carrying out inherently dangerous activities is an enduring concern for the Marine Corps. To this end, I am committed to the well-being of every person in our command, and we will foster a culture in which all members are empowered to identify and speak up against unsafe behavior. Put simply, we take care of each other at all times.

The Marines, Sailors, and Civilians of FHG need to remain ready to serve our nation's needs, and preventing injuries to people and damage to equipment is a core tenant of our readiness. While there are policies and procedures in place to protect us, we must also remember that at the point of impact, safety is as much an individual responsibility as it is a unit responsibility. I encourage each of you to work together to create an environment where responsible choices are made and supported. Whether you are driving home, operating a tactical vehicle in support of training and operations, or working in the office, we all must work individually and collectively as a team while maintaining a focus on risk management and incorporating the risk management process in everything we do to ensure the mission of FHG is accomplished in a sound and safe manner.

If uncertain about your own or someone else's behavior, use the matrix in MCO 3500.27C to identify possible unsafe behaviors and situations that might lead to injury. Know that most injuries occur off duty and at home, and fatalities are most likely to occur off duty while driving. We must make safety a habit that intertwines itself into everything we do, both on and off duty. Unsafe behavior and actions have a detrimental effect on unit readiness, can cost the lives of our teammates, and is incompatible with Marine Corps standards. Our mission requirements are inherently dangerous enough and there is no reason to increase our exposure to risk through unsafe behavior and actions.

When you see something unsafe report it, avoid it, and prevent it. Be the responsible leader and the strength of the force. Become familiar with relevant safety regulations and protocols to ensure success. Utilize your chain of command to report safety concerns and provide recommendations to improve the Safety Program. The Force Headquarters Group Safety Officer is Gunnery Sergeant Hasting, who can be reached at (504) 697-8863 or william.hasting@usmc.mil.

Continue to watch out for your Marine Corps family and take action when necessary. Safety is a team effort led by individual actions, if you observe an unsafe act, it is your responsibility to stop it, and you have my support doing so.

D. K. WINNACKER
Brigadier General, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve
Commanding General
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Category	Description
I	Loss of the ability to accomplish the mission Death or permanent total disability Loss of a mission-critical system or equipment Major facility damage Severe environmental damage Mission-critical security failure Unacceptable collateral damage
II	Significantly degraded mission capability or unit readiness Permanent partial disability or severe injury or illness Extensive damage to equipment or systems Significant damage to property or the environment Security failure Significant collateral damage
III	Degraded mission capability or unit readiness Minor damage to equipment, systems, property, or the environment Minor injury or illness
IV	Little or no adverse impact on mission capability or unit readiness Minimal threat to personnel safety or health Slight equipment or systems damage, but fully functional and serviceable Little or no property or environmental damage

Table 1-1. Severity Categories

(2) Determine Probability. This is an assessment of the probability that a hazard will result in a mishap or loss and is defined by assessment of such factors as location, exposure (cycles or hours of operation), affected populations, experience, or previously established statistical information. Probability categories are assigned a letter according to the criteria in Table 1-2.

Category	Description
A	Likely to occur immediately or within a short period of time. Expected to occur frequently to an individual item or person Expected to occur continuously over a service life for a fleet, inventory of items, or group
B	Probably will occur in time Expected to occur several times to an individual item or person Expected to occur frequently over a service life for a fleet, inventory of items or group.
C	May occur in time Can reasonably be expected to occur sometime to an individual item or person Can reasonably be expected to occur several times over a service life for a fleet, inventory of items, or group
D	Unlikely to occur, but not impossible.

Table 1-2. Probability Categories

(3) Assign the Risk Assessment Code (RAC). The RAC is an expression of risk that combines the elements of hazard severity and mishap probability. The RAC is a level of risk for each hazard expressed as a single Arabic number as portrayed in the Basic Risk Assessment Matrix in Figure 1-3. Although not required, the matrix is helpful in identifying the RAC and in determining hazard abatement priorities. In some cases, the worst credible consequence of a hazard may not correspond to the highest RAC for that hazard. For example, one hazard may have two potential consequences. The severity of the worst consequence (I) may be unlikely (D), resulting in a RAC of 3. The severity of the lesser consequence (II) may be probable (B),

resulting in a RAC of 2. Therefore, it is important to consider less severe consequences of a hazard if they are more likely than the worst credible consequence since this combination may present a greater overall risk.

Risk Assessment Matrix		Probability			
		A	B	C	D
SEVERITY	I	1	1	2	3
	II	1	2	3	4
	III	2	3	4	5
	IV	3	4	5	5
Risk Assessment Codes 1-Critical 2-Serious 3-Moderate 4-Minor 5-Negligible					

Figure 1-3. Basic Risk Assessment Matrix

(4) Risk Assessment Pitfalls. The following pitfalls should be avoided during the assessment.

(a) Over optimism – not being totally honest or not looking for root causes.

(b) Misrepresentation – individual perspective may distort the data.

(c) Alarmism – worst case scenarios are used regardless of their possibility.

(d) Indiscrimination – all data is given equal weight.

(e) Prejudice – subjective or hidden agendas are used vice facts.

(f) Inaccuracy – bad or misunderstood data nullify accurate risk assessment.

(g) Enumeration – difficulty in assigning a numerical value to human behavior.

c. Make Risk Decisions (Step 3). Step 3 is accomplished in two sub-steps in order to make informed risk decisions: identifying and assessing risk control options and ultimately making risk decisions.

(1) Identify and Assess Risk Control Options. Starting with the most serious hazard, develop one or more control options that will either avoid the hazard or reduce the risk to an acceptable level consistent with task or mission accomplishment.

(a) There are myriad control options which can either reduce risk or avoid it altogether. These options include:

1. Reject the risk. If overall risk exceeds the benefit, then do not take the risk. This is a valid option when you do not have the

authority to apply proper or necessary controls and ensure risk is elevated to the proper level.

2. Avoid the Risk. It may be possible to avoid specific risks altogether or by conducting the task or mission in a different way. Be aware that conducting a mission by an alternate means may present new hazards to be considered.

3. Delay an Action. If there is not a hard timeline or other benefit to a quick accomplishment of a task or mission, it may be prudent to reduce the risk by delaying the action until favorable conditions present themselves.

4. Transfer the Risk. Risk may be reduced by transferring all or some portion of a particular task or mission. Transferring risk to another individual, unit, or platform that is better positioned to face the risk decreases the probability or severity of the risk to the total force.

5. Compensate for the Risk. Compensating for potential losses by assigning redundant capabilities ensures the success of critical tasks or missions.

(b) Types of Controls. Controls can take many forms but they fall into three basic categories:

1. Engineering Controls. These are controls that use engineering methods to reduce risks by design, material selection, or substitution when technically or economically feasible. An example is using an extension rod for cleaning rather than climbing a ladder.

2. Administrative Controls. These are controls that reduce risk through specific administrative actions such as providing suitable warnings, markings, placards, signs, and notices; establishing written policies, programs, instructions, and standard operating procedures; training personnel to recognize hazards and take appropriate precautionary measures; and limiting the exposure to a hazard. An example is limiting the number of alcohol beverages you consume.

3. Physical Controls. These are controls that take the form of barriers or guards to warn individuals and units that a hazard exists. Additionally, personal protective equipment (PPE) falls into this category. This is the least desirable control type to use. This control should be used only after engineering and administrative controls have been fully implemented. An example is wearing body armor and Kevlar helmets while traveling on a main supply route.

(c) Criteria for Evaluating the Effectiveness of Selected Controls. Examples of criteria for effective control options are listed in Table 1-3.

Control Criteria	Remarks
Suitability	Control removes the threat or mitigates (reduces) the risk to an acceptable level.
Feasibility	Has the capability to implement the control.
Acceptability	Benefit or value gained by implementing the control justifies the cost in resources and time.
Explicitness	Clearly specifies who, what, where, when, why, and how each control is to be used.
Support	Adequate personnel, equipment, supplies, and facilities necessary to implement a suitable control are available.
Standards	Guidance and procedures for implementing a control are clear, practical, and specific.
Training	Knowledge and skills are adequate to implement a control.
Leadership	Leaders are ready, willing, and able to enforce standards required to implement a control.
Individual	Individual personnel are sufficiently self-disciplined to implement a control.

Table 1-3. Criteria for Effective Controls

(2) Make Risk Decisions. With selected controls in place, decide if the residual risk is acceptable and the benefit outweighs the risk. This decision must be made at the right level and by the appropriate individual who can balance the risk against the task or mission and its potential benefit. If it is determined that the risk level is too high, then the development of additional controls, modification of the plan, or rejection of the course of action becomes necessary. Additionally, if risk outweighs the benefit or if assistance is required to implement controls, communication with higher authority in the chain of command is recommended.

d. Implement Controls (Step 4). The critical check for this step is to ensure that controls are converted into clear, simple execution orders understood at all levels. This requires that the plan is clearly communicated to all involved personnel, accountability is established, and the requisite support is provided.

e. Supervise (Step 5). Supervision involves conducting follow-up evaluations of the controls to ensure they remain in place and have the desired effect. Engaged supervision includes three basic actions: monitoring the effectiveness in the implementation of risk controls; conducting a continuous systematic review determining the need for further assessment of all or a portion of the task or mission due to unanticipated change; and ensuring a feedback system is established for capturing lessons learned, and identifying any new hazards that may arise or subsequent adjustments needed to previously established controls.