

# COMMANDING OFFICER'S STATEMENT ON SAFETY

The Marine Corps is America's expeditionary force in readiness, thus requiring all personnel to maintain a high state of readiness for whatever challenges may come. Safety is central to readiness, whether we are engaged in combat, training, or on liberty. All leaders must guard against reckless and irresponsible behavior, both at the unit and individual level.

Our Marines and Sailors will inevitably operate under high risk conditions while performing their duties and will also be exposed to hazards while off duty. Ensuring the safety of our personnel is no small challenge, and it demands awareness, leadership, supervision, adaptation, and learning on a continuous basis. Leaders must connect with subordinates on a personal level, ensuring awareness of risks that are present, and must take prompt action to mitigate those risks. Leaders are responsible for unit-wide understanding of and compliance with the Marine Corps Safety Program, and they must foster a safe environment at all times and ensure adherence to command safety regulations.

During training, unit leaders will effectively implement and use the operational risk management (ORM) process, incorporating it into standard operating procedures, operations orders, and training plans. Leaders will ensure proper safety equipment is on hand and conditions are as ideal as possible for safe mission execution. Everyone is responsible for identifying and calling attention to unsafe conditions, is authorized to cease training if they determine conditions to be unsafe, and will immediately report the incident via the chain of command.

An emphasis on safety is equally as important during leave and liberty. The loss of even one Marine or Sailor to risky and neglectful behavior off duty is unacceptable. Alcohol and drug use and abuse, fatigue accompanied by poor judgment, and unsafe operation of vehicles and motorcycles are just a few examples. Laziness, overconfidence, poor preparation, inattention to details, and negligence will inevitably lead to injury or death. Strict discipline and attention to detail will always be used to enforce safety regulations. There is no excuse for taking shortcuts that violate safety standards.

Marines and Sailors are bold and aggressive by nature. Risk and dangerous conditions will always be present in our lives. Strong leadership, sound thinking, and solid planning will ensure risks are mitigated regardless of operational complexity. These safety programs and policies are about you, the individual. My primary concern as your commander is your livelihood, your ability to live a long, prosperous life and to serve your country with pride and professionalism. Be smart and understand your environment. Taking care of each other is paramount to success. Help or advice is never more than a phone call away.

Semper Fidelis,



Ralph J. Rizzo Jr

Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps

Commanding Officer

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