

COMMANDING OFFICER'S STATEMENT ON SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION RESPONSE

SEXUAL ASSAULT HAS NO PLACE IN OUR RANKS. IF LEFT UNCHECKED, IT WILL REMAIN A SILENT ENEMY WALKING AMONGST US-AN ENEMY THAT INFLECTS TERRIBLE PAIN ON ITS VICTIM, DESTROYS UNIT COHESION AND LEAVES A LASTING STAIN ON OUR REPUTATION. DO YOUR PART TO PROTECT THAT REPUTATION- EARNED BY THE TREMENDOUS EXAMPLE AND SACRIFICES OF COUNTLESS MARINES PAST AND PRESENT.

Sexual assault is a dishonorable, despicable and destructive criminal act and will not be tolerated. The term "sexual assault" is defined as intentional sexual contact, characterized by the use of force, threats, intimidation, abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Sexual assault includes rape, forcible sodomy (oral or anal sex), and other unwanted sexual contact that is aggravated, abusive, or wrongful (to include unwanted and inappropriate sexual contact), or attempts to commit these acts.

"Consent shall not be deemed or construed to mean the failure by the victim to offer physical resistance. Consent is not given when a person uses coercion, or when the victim is asleep, incapacitated, or unconscious."

Sexual assault has no place in our ranks. If left unchecked, it will remain a silent enemy walking amongst us-an enemy that inflicts terrible pain on its victims, destroys unit cohesion and leaves a lasting stain on our reputation. We must "All" do our part as leaders to protect that reputation earned by the tremendous example and sacrifices of countless Marines past and present.

Reporting an incident of sexual assault may be initiated via the following reports:

-A **restricted report** allows the victim to receive medical, informational, advocacy, and emotional/psychological counseling support services without notification of the command. A restricted report can be made to a **Uniformed Victim Advocate (UVA), Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), or Healthcare Provider (HCP)**. In a restricted report the victim's identity remains confidential, and it is not forwarded to law enforcement or command authorities.

-An **unrestricted report** also allows a victim to receive medical, informational, advocacy and emotional/psychological counseling support services and an official investigation ensues. Although the victim's identity will not remain confidential, care will be given to ensure that it is released only to those with a need-to-know (i.e. unit commander and investigating authorities).

Uniformed Victim Advocates are available 24/7 to serve as your representative providing emotional support and information on medical, legal and administrative processes. Assistance and additional information are available through the FLW MARDET SARC, Mrs. Peggy Montgomery-Hall at (573) 596-0186 or (573) 337-5076. Also available 24/7 is the FLW Sexual Assault Support Line at (573) 855-1327. DoD 24/7 Safe Helpline at (877) 955-5247 or National Sexual Assault Online Hotline (800) 656-4673.

Semper Fidelis,



Ralph J. Rizzo Jr

Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps

Commanding Officer

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