

1700
MRQ
1 Oct 2008

From: Chairman, Family Readiness Committee
To: Chairman, Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS), Board of Directors
(BOD)

Subj: FAMILY READINESS COMMITTEE MINUTES OF 18 MARCH 2008

Ref: (a) FRC Charter

1. Per the reference, the Family Readiness Committee (FRC) convened at 0910 on 18 March 2008 at the Clubs at Quantico, MCB Quantico, VA.

2. Members Present:

LtGen K. Stalder, CG II MEF, Chair
Ms. T. McLaughlin, MARFORRES
Ms. K. Faison, MARFORCOM
Ms. E. Montalvo, MCRC
Mr. J. Morris, MARFORPAC
CAPT J. Hightower, Chaplain of the Marine Corps (Rep)
CAPT D. Gibson, Medical Officer of the Marine Corps (Rep)
Mrs. A. Conway, Spouse, CMC
Mrs. R. Magnus, Spouse, APMC
Ms. C. Fox, KVN Subcommittee Chair
Ms. M. Regner, L.I.N.K.S. Subcommittee Chair
Ms. P. Helland, I MEF Rep
Ms. D. Fettig-Loftesnes, III MEF Rep
Mr. T. Larsen, Ex Officio, Director, MR
Mr. K. Dunn, Ex Officio, Deputy Director, Marine and Family Programs, MR
Ms. A. Jones, Ex Officio, Recorder, MR

Members Excused:

Spouse, SMMC
Senior Enlisted Representative, II MEF

Others present:

LtCol J. Melton, MR Division
Maj M. Porter, MR Division
Maj J. Krause, MR Division
Capt M. Mellon, HQ CMC
Capt J. Calvin, I MEF
Capt L. Philipp, II MEF
2ndLt A. Teague, III MEF
SgtMaj K. Wilson, MR Division
Ms. K. Lewis, MR Division
Mr. G. Gordon, MR Division
Ms. J. Nitsche, MR Division
Ms. E. Flores, MR Division
Mr. J. Clarke, MR Division
Ms. C. Erickson, MR Division
Ms. C. Lindsay, MR Division
Ms. K. Johnson, MR Division
Ms. L. Gahagan, MR Division
Ms. M. Rau, MR Division
Mr. B. Barnes, MR Division
Ms. G. Reed, MR Division

Subj: FAMILY READINESS COMMITTEE MINUTES OF 18 MARCH 2008

Others present continued:

Mr. M. Swords, MR Division
Ms. C. Carlisle, MR Division
Ms. S. Doss, MR Division
Mr. T. Gaskin, MR Division
Ms. B. Deeds, MR Division
Ms. J. Steinen, MR Division
Ms. T. Nelson, MR Division
Ms. K. Gates, MR Division
Mr. J. McGoldrick, MR Division
Mr. R. Milano, MCB Camp Butler
Ms. S. Della-Corte, MCB Camp Pendleton
Ms. J. Mohrlock, MCB Camp Pendleton
Ms. K. Gough, I MEF
Ms. G. Kramlich, L.I.N.K.S. member

3. Review of 23 January 2008 Meeting Minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved as written.

4. Old Business Update. Mr. Dunn provided an update on outstanding old business items. The Chair provided an update on the Parent Network action item assigned to II MEF. The Parents Network OPT, chartered by CG II MEF, developed a proposal and model on how the Parents Network could function within the Command Team. The Chair indicated he would ask MR to review the OPT recommendation.

5. Status of MCFTB/Unit Family Readiness Programs. Ms. Gates briefed the status of the Roadshow, staffing, training, technology, the communication contract, and volunteer recognition.

a. Roadshow. At the time of the meeting, the Roadshow was nearly complete with only one date remaining. Feedback received during the Roadshow was being incorporated into policies and training.

b. MCFTB and FRO Staffing. Members discussed the staffing of FRO positions with civilians. In March 2008, CMC authorized additional funding for all-civilian FRO staffing. The Chair discussed that, while some commanders opposed civilian staffing, military manpower was insufficient to staff the FRO billets. He went on to say that the FRO billet was critical and without quality FRO's there would not be a quality program. Mr. Larsen stated that feedback received on recently hired civilian FROs was very positive.

c. Training. At the time of the meeting, the Command Team Handbook had been developed through the efforts of the OPT and had been pilot-tested. Feedback was very positive overall. In February 2008, the MCFTB Training Development Working Group met to develop modules that would be used to brief and instruct trainers. The Working Group was comprised of 48 Family Readiness Subject Matter Experts from the field. Pilot testing of the 214 deliverables developed by the group was scheduled for Spring 2008 followed by Train the Trainer sessions in Spring/Early Summer 2008. The modules would continue to be refined once the Command Team Handbook was completed.

d. Technology. The status of technology procurement and implementation was briefed. It was noted that the initial roll-out of the Mass Communication Tool would pilot tested with 26th MEU.

Subj: FAMILY READINESS COMMITTEE MINUTES OF 18 MARCH 2008

e. Communication. MR had taken action to draft the statement of work in conjunction with selected commanders. It was anticipated that the Statement of Work would be finalized by April 2008, and contract award by May 2008.

f. Volunteer Recognition. The volunteer focus group met in November 2007. MR drafted the outline for the Standard Volunteer Recognition Program, currently under review/revision at the time of the meeting. Highlights of the draft indicated volunteers would be recognized during the month of April - national volunteer recognition month. In addition to recognition in April, volunteers would receive various incentives based on milestones achieved. Standard volunteer awards would be split into two categories: time in service and performance. A CMC award had also been suggested.

6. Mass Communication Tool Demonstration. Ms. Doss provided an overview and demonstration of the Mass Communication Tool. The Mass Communication Tool contract was awarded in February 2008. The intent is that the FRO would be the primary user of the system. Marines would provide contact information for the persons they would like to receive notifications. The Mass Communication Tool is capable of sending messages via e-mail, phone, or text. Messages can be sent with acknowledgement requested allowing Mass Communication Tool users to determine who did/did not receive notifications. Additionally, the system can generate reports from received responses. Mass Communication Tool training will explain the importance of the FRO managing the system and appropriate use of the tool. The Chair emphasized that the tool must be used effectively to send succinct and necessary messages to avoid information burnout on the part of message recipients.

7. Volunteer Tracking Tool Demonstration. Ms. Doss and Ms. Deeds provided a demonstration of the Volunteer Tracking Tool. The tool is used to track volunteer hours, training, and for storing volunteer personal information to allow ease of transferring between installations. Additionally, opportunities for volunteering could be posted within the system. Training on the Volunteer Tracking Tool would be completed in conjunction with Mass Communication Tool training and would include FROs and MCFTB staff. Training dates were TBD and dependent upon complete implementation of the Mass Communication Tool.

8. Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) Update and Way Ahead. Ms. Erickson provided an update on EFMP staffing, technology, respite care, training, marketing, and enrollments.

a. Staffing. At the time of the meeting, planned civilian and contract staff had not been hired. However, PDs were established for NSPS civilian hires and an RFP was issued for contract staff. Legal support would be provided through a third party contract.

b. Technology. Two technology solutions would be implemented to support EFMP: a Case Management System and Digital Document Senders. The Case Management System was expected to be reviewed during a field trial run in April 2008. MR was continuing to work with MI to complete implementation of the system. The purchase request for the Digital Document Senders was with Contracts at the time of the meeting. MR would monitor and support procurement of one document sender per installation.

c. Respite Care. Two parallel respite care programs were running: on the installation level serving 25 children and through HQ funded care with the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (NACCRRRA) with

Subj: FAMILY READINESS COMMITTEE MINUTES OF 18 MARCH 2008

28 children being served. At the time of the meeting, NACCRRRA was delivering services in San Diego; VA and NC would begin to deliver services in March 2008 followed by SC in April 2008. MR was continuing to monitor.

d. Training. Training dates for EFMP Managers were TBD and contingent upon the timeline of hiring. Topics to be covered in training were new policy and procedures, EFMP respite, common diagnoses, and oversight of contract staff. MR was drafting the training agenda and syllabus to include training on the Case Management System.

e. Marketing. The EFMP marketing campaign was to begin in the June 2008 timeframe with MR providing PA guidance and press releases. Installations would be encouraged to market through the most effective means at their location. MR was planning to begin an EFMP Roadshow in Summer 2008, modeled after the very successful MCFTB Roadshow.

f. Autism Support. APMC had expressed great interest in identifying the population of families with a diagnosis on the autism spectrum and ways to partner with organizations to provide autism services. MR EFMP staff had visited the May Institute during February 2008 to learn how its program is executed. MR was seeking CL review and concurrence on a partnership with the May Institute to provide autism services.

g. Enrollment. MCIWEST compiled EFMP enrollment data for each of its installations on 01 February 2008. Subsequently, MR extracted data from the EFMP database on 28 February 2008 and found that the difference in numbers was less than 4 percent.

9. School Liaison (SL) Program Update and Way Ahead. Ms. Nelson provided an update on the SL Program and the way ahead. At the time of the meeting, staffing of SL positions had begun. Nineteen vacancies remained of the requirement of 25 SLs. Installation SLs were to work at the local school district level while collaborating and coordinating with community and installation family support programs to build and ensure a responsive network to support Marines families. Regional SLs were to work at the state level, and HQMC SLs were to work at the national/Federal level to match state and national education hierarchies. SL training was to be provided in several formats. Initial training was to be held at the Military Child Education Coalition Annual Conference scheduled for July 2008; Sister Services were to participate in the conference as well. Follow-on training plans were to be provided within the annual support funding issued to the installations. Marketing of the SL program would be accomplished via several avenues including existing MCCS programs and Information and Referral services. Additionally, the SL Program would participate in the EFMP Roadshow scheduled for Summer 2008. Members discussed the importance of the program, especially in remote and isolated locations, and the three-tiered approach to SL staffing in order to ensure a cohesive network to best meet the needs of the mobile military child.

10. EOS Spouse and Joint Session Update. Maj Porter briefed the update on outstanding action items assigned to MR from the EOS Spouse and Joint Sessions. Action items had been assigned in the following areas: GWOT Warrior & Family Support Plan, Volunteer PDs, L.I.N.K.S. for Parents, and various issues from the Joint EOS Session.

Subj: FAMILY READINESS COMMITTEE MINUTES OF 18 MARCH 2008

a. GWOT Warrior & Family Support Plan. With the implementation of daily log updates on Family Readiness implementation, the action item regarding providing communication releases on the GWOT plan was completed.

b. Volunteer PDs. Most action items regarding volunteer PDs were complete. Action items still being worked were renaming "senior spouses", avoiding jargon use in PDs, and developing MCCS employee training on the family readiness transition concept.

c. L.I.N.K.S. for Parents. Spouse comments were still being incorporated into the L.I.N.K.S. for Parents draft. Additionally, a supplement was being created containing information for Independent Duty and Reserves.

d. Issues from the Joint EOS Session. All action items from the Joint Session were complete. Action items included the examination of FRO staffing and providing the implementation plan for DC P&R requirements.

e. Also at the January EOS session, Mrs. Conway tasked MR to develop a FRO evaluation survey and administration methodology. Ms. Flores briefed the survey and provided a sample for Member review. The FRO survey was to be administered to active duty Marines, spouses, parents, and extended family members in order to provide feedback to the commander on the overall effectiveness of the Unit Family Readiness program and FRO. Three administration options were presented as well as the pros and cons for each: 1) Interactive Customer Evaluation System (ICE); 2) Family Readiness Assessment Tool; and 3) MARCORSYSCOM Survey Tool. MR recommended option 3, as this method was used to deliver FA surveys; however, MR was to continue to coordinate with commanders to refine the administration options. Members discussed that the surveys must be targeted and consider the diversity of the families responding. Additionally, the survey communications were to be on the families' terms and kept at "top-level" in order to avoid survey fatigue. Mr. Larsen stated that surveys would be initiated every 6 months by the commander so feedback would go directly to her/him.

DECISION/ACTION: MR will continue to coordinate with commanders and spouses on the initiative.

11. Families Overcoming and Coping Under Stress (FOCUS) Project. Dr. Gaskin provided an overview of the FOCUS project. The project is funded by BUMED and was previously piloted at Camp Pendleton in 2003. Headquartered at UCLA, the project is a resiliency-building program designed for military families to cope with combat operational stress during wartime. The project's eight sessions are offered at family-convenient hours and are led by a clinician. At the time of the meeting, FOCUS was available at Camp Lejeune, Camp Pendleton, MCB Hawaii, and Marine Forces in Okinawa. The administration of FOCUS at the aforementioned locations was coordinated with Marine and Family Services. FOCUS was not available for reservists, but Members discussed the possibility of offering FOCUS through Military OneSource.

12. Closing Remarks. Mr. Larsen commended the efforts of the 48-member MCFTB training OPT and Roadshow participants whose efforts helped raise awareness of the refreshing of family readiness programs.

CAPT Hightower commented that he is often asked about the portability of CREDO programs and stated that the programs are portable and available through the network.

Subj: FAMILY READINESS COMMITTEE MINUTES OF 18 MARCH 2008

SgtMaj Wilson indicated that he was working with TECOM to address incorporating family readiness training and education into formal schools as was promised during the MCFTB Roadshow.

The Chair stated that II MEF hiring guidance had been sent out but not much feedback had been received.

With no further comments offered, the meeting adjourned at 1152.

/s/
LtGen D. Hejlik
Chairman

A. D. JONES
Recorder