

1700
MRQ
12 Dec 07

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

Subj: FAMILY READINESS COMMITTEE MINUTES OF 26 SEPTEMBER 2007

Ref: (a) FRC Charter

1. Per the reference, the Family Readiness Committee (FRC) convened at 0810 on 26 September 2007 at The Marine Corps University, Breckenridge Hall, MCB Quantico, VA.

2. Members Present:

LtGen K. Stalder, II MEF, Chair
Ms. T. McLaughlin, MARFORRES
Ms. K. Faison, MARFORCOM
Ms. E. Simms, MCRC
Mr. K. Lum, MARCORBASESPAC
Capt L. Greenslit, Chaplain of the Marine Corps (Rep)
RADM (Sel) W. Roberts, Medical Officer of the Marine Corps
Ms. A. Conway, Spouse, CMC
Ms. R. Magnus, Spouse, ACMC
Ms. E. Kent, Spouse, SMMC
Ms. M. Bergan-Davis, KVN Subcommittee Chair (Rep)
Ms. M. Regner, L.I.N.K.S. Subcommittee Chair
MajGen T. R. Larsen, Ex Officio, Director, MR
Mr. M. Swords, Ex Officio, Deputy Director, Programs, MR
Ms. A. Jones, Ex Officio, Recorder, MR

Members Excused:

Senior Enlisted Rep, II MEF

Others present:

LtCol J. Melton, MR Division
Maj M. Porter, MR Division
SgtMaj K. Wilson, MR Division
Ms. K. Lewis, MR Division
Mr. G. Gordon, MR Division
Mr. R. Winkelhausen, MR Division
Ms. M. Petrella, MR Division
Mr. B. Barnes, MR Division
Mr. J. Clarke, MR Division
Mr. W. Dillon, MR Division
Ms. C. Erickson, MR Division
Ms. K. Facon, MR Division
Ms. K. Gates, MR Division
Ms. L. Gahagan, MR Division
Ms. K. Johnson, MR Division
Mr. D. Turner, MR Division
Ms. F. Seybold, MCAS Cherry Point
Mr. R. Soule, MCAS Miramar
Mr. W. Linnehan, MCB Camp Butler
Mr. J. Sollis, MCB Camp Lejeune

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Others present continued:

Mr. J. Cowan, MCB Camp Lejeune
Ms. S. Della-Corte, MCB Camp Pendleton
Ms. J. Mohrlock, MCB Camp Pendleton
Ms. S. Stalder, Spouse, CG II MEF

3. Review of Approved 22 March 2007 Meeting Minutes. No additional comments were offered.

4. Old Business Updates/Status. Mr. Swords reviewed the ongoing actions generated at the 22 March 2007 meeting. Two actions were completed and eight items remained open. Discussion ensued regarding the topic of Inspector General Checklists used to conduct command Family Readiness inspections. The Chair expressed concern that these inspections go to the right level of detail. Mrs. Conway recommended that the checklist needs input from those people being served.

ACTIONS: 1) MR to provide updates on old business items at the next meeting and include deliverable and date columns in the action items table. 2) MR to provide the checklist used in family readiness inspections to Mrs. Conway.

5. Executive Offsite (EOS) Decision on the Marine Corps Family Team Building (MCFTB) Functionality Assessment (FA). Maj Porter briefed the MCFTB FA timeline, recommendations, findings and funding requirements that were presented at the Executive Offsite (EOS) for CMC decision on 06 September 2007.

The Committee reviewed FA findings and recommendations. Discussion ensued regarding the expansion of the L.I.N.K.S. program to Marines, children, and parents, insufficiency of current staffing to attain wartime footing, negative perception of the KVN, training requirements, and implementing a volunteer appreciation program. Mrs. Conway commented that arranging L.I.N.K.S. training must be included on the FRO checklist.

At the EOS, the staffing of Family Readiness Officer (FRO) billets generated the most discussion of all FA recommendations. A hybrid labor mix of civilian and military FROs was the selected option for FRO staffing. Staffing of FRO billets at the battalion and squadron level requires 317 SNCOs in the uncompensated structure with civilians assuming FRO positions at higher levels. Discussion ensued regarding the importance of selecting highly qualified individuals, both military and civilian, to assume FRO positions. MR staff noted action to coordinate with MM/MP to determine the way ahead for military staffing due to noted challenges in finding high-quality FROs. MajGen Larsen also discussed various alternatives for staffing military personnel FRO billets including retire/retain, retire/recall, use of Wounded Warriors, and those who have frequently deployed. MR has drafted base and command implementation plans as well as standardized billet/position requirements. Oversight of implementation plans would be provided by the MROC. MajGen Larsen stated that the MROC requested a brief on manning and fiscal implementation plans to ensure the additional MCFTB funding is fully executed in one year. At the direction of CMC, the Strategic Communication Council (SCC) was directed to convene to develop a detailed communication campaign plan. Pending the release of SCC communication templates and support documents, MR drafted Public Affairs Guidance (PAG) regarding Marine Corps Family Readiness Programs. The PAG was presented to the Committee for review and edits.

ACTION: Include arranging L.I.N.K.S. training on the FRO checklist.

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6. Wartime Footing for Family Readiness PAG. Ms. Lewis presented the PAG. CMC directed that family programs must attain a wartime footing in order to achieve sustainment and alleviate stress on Marines and their families. The Chair stated that CMC has given the Marine Corps an unparalleled opportunity to refresh family programs and attain wartime footing by providing financial resources. He further stated that the communication element of family programs must be carefully examined and planned. Effective organizational communication was key to achieving success. MajGen Larsen agreed and added that a portion of the \$30M had been earmarked for a firm to help with developing an organizational communication plan. He also stressed that the opportunity to make these improvements is now. MRZ requested the Committee send them ideas, recommendations, and issues regarding communication.

Additionally, the Committee discussed employment challenges for volunteers/spouses when applying for the new permanent family readiness positions. MajGen Larsen stated that NAF positions would open vacancies to a broader audience.

7. Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) FA Out Brief and Recommendations. Ms. Erickson briefed the findings of the EFMP FA that was conducted 20-24 August 2007. Prior to the FA, the ACMC directed the FA to produce three deliverables in addition to the standard FA deliverables. They were: 1) Identify unmet need by location; 2) Identify issues and organize by action required; and 3) Develop a Continuum of Care. Initial funding requirements resulting from FA findings were submitted for the \$100M GWOT supplemental for family programs. Subsequent briefings on the EFMP FA were to be given at the General Officers Symposium (GOS), to the ACMC, and to the MCCS BOD. MR was continuing to refine FA recommendations into actionable items.

The Committee reviewed the Continuum of Care as well as installation and HQ staffing models. Appropriate civilian grades for staff billets were still being reviewed. Several comments were made about the difficulty in finding qualified case managers. Additionally, MR was considering a central contract for staffing contractor positions.

8. Individual Augmentee (IA) Update. Ms. Gates briefed. Inconsistent support for IAs and their families was a significant problem for the Marine Corps. The issue was discussed at the Wounded Marine and Family Support Forum. Subsequently, an IA working group was held in July 2007 to define/classify IAs, identify feasible levels of support for IAs and families, develop standards to deliver such support and define responsibilities throughout deployment phases. A draft MARADMIN was presented for Committee review that outlined individual Marine, parent command, and gaining command responsibilities. It was often the case that the responsibility of providing family support was unclear between parent and gaining commands. Additionally complicating the issue was that IAs often did not deploy with Marine Corps units. Members discussed adding IA family readiness training to the Commanders Course while noting the difficulty with changing the course's tight agenda.

ACTIONS: The Committee directed that MR develop a specific plan to provide family support to IA's and their families and re-draft the MARADMIN accordingly.

9. Resource Overview. Mr. Winkelhausen provided an overview of funding decisions since the last Committee meeting that would significantly advance family support programs due to CMC priority and guidance. At EOS, CMC directed \$30M steady state funding to enhance Marine and family support services. MR

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developed and staffed implementation plans to the MARFORs and installations (with a copy to the MEF's) for validation and comment with a due date of 05 October 2007. The Chair stated that the MARFORs must push the tasker down to the unit level for review. The detailed implementation plans were to be briefed to MROC in late October. Additionally, MR was notified of a \$100M amendment to the GWOT supplemental for Warrior Family Support initiatives. MR expected to execute the \$100M in FY08. It was noted that the Marine Corps was preparing to build the budget for the 2010-2015 program. Therefore, it was imperative that the Marine Corps proceed with execution strategically and identify key initiatives for funding. Additionally, MR was to advocate for a CMC redline to Marine and Family Support funding so as to not re-compete the funding initiatives during the POM cycles. The Chair indicated his support for the CMC redline initiative.

10. Key Volunteer (KV) Updates. Ms. Lewis briefed the initiative to establish a communication link to command level KVs. The proposal was to create and distribute a high-level email newsletter detailing new and current programs including MCFTB and volunteering. Recipients would be referred via links to additional sources or POCs. MR's Public Affairs section would assist efforts by establishing the command distribution list and draft the communication strawman documents. The MR Programs Directorate was to provide the snippets of information (containing 50 words or less). The KV Subcommittee would be consulted on content and distribution processes. Members discussed the frequency of this communication and suggested it be sent semi-annually (January and June).

DECISION/ACTION: The Committee approved the proposal to distribute an email newsletter to KVs. The Committee directed MR to send the first newsletter.

11. KVN Subcommittee Update. Ms. Gates and Ms. Bergan-Davis briefed the ongoing actions and areas of interest of the Subcommittee. The KVN Subcommittee met in February, April, June, and August 2007. Shanon Glezen was recently added as a Member at Large. All positions on the Subcommittee were filled. The following topics were discussed:

a. The KV Trainers Conference was held 5-9 February 2007. Updated KV training materials were released in April 2007.

b. The Subcommittee discussed the eligibility of parents within MARFORRES to serve as Key Volunteer Coordinators (KVC's). The Subcommittee decided a policy change to allow parents of MARFORRES Marines to serve as KVs or KVC's should be recommended.

c. An additional Subcommittee meeting was convened in April 2007 to discuss the MCFTB FA recommendations relative to Subcommittee effectiveness and volunteer staffing.

d. At the March 2007 FRC meeting, the Subcommittee was tasked to review their charter. The action was put on hold pending approval of the MCFTB FA recommendations.

e. Online training for KVs was discussed. It was noted that the current online version was outdated. Training updates are underway and will be validated and tested throughout its development. The Chair stated that the specific functions of all individuals in the KV network needs to be clearly defined so training programs can be developed accordingly and day-to-day

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workloads can be balanced. MajGen Larsen added that an implementation plan for KV program changes is critical and processes must be in place as soon as possible.

12. L.I.N.K.S. Subcommittee Updates. Ms. Gates and Ms. Regner briefed the ongoing actions and areas of interest of the Subcommittee. The L.I.N.K.S. Subcommittee met in January, March, May and July 2007. Lynne Crowe was recently added as a Member at Large. There were two Members at Large vacancies being advertised. The following topics were discussed:

a. Team Leader/On-Installation Trainer Training was held in September 2007. Training materials revised and updated in July 2007.

b. L.I.N.K.S. celebrated its 10-year anniversary in September. MARADMIN 472/07 was released to encourage commanders to plan installation events to mark the occasion.

c. At the March 2007 FRC meeting, the Subcommittee was tasked to review their charter. The action was put on hold pending approval of the MCFTB FA recommendations.

d. Discussion ensued regarding contacting new spouses and encouraging attendance at L.I.N.K.S. sessions, as the macro attendance rate had been below expectations (e.g. of 30,000 new spouses in the Marine Corps each year, only 2,000 attend L.I.N.K.S.). The Chair suggested that analysis should be done as to why attendance isn't better. It was stated that FROs can provide direction and encourage L.I.N.K.S. participation. It was suggested that when Marines marry, their spouses names and addresses show up in USMC databases.

ACTION: MR to coordinate with MI Division about getting names and addresses of new spouses and forwarding them to FROs to encourage participation in L.I.N.K.S. sessions.

13. Closing Remarks. The following two action items were assigned during closing remarks:

ACTION: Develop a model for the Parents Network and brief the Committee, in detail, at the next meeting for approval to launch the program.

ACTION: Review screening and assignment policy for overseas EFMP.

With no further business or comments offered, the meeting adjourned at 1215.

/s/
K. J. STALDER
Chairman
Family Readiness Committee

A. D. JONES
Recorder