



Module 1:

Welcome Aboard/ Newcomers Orientation

I. Introduction

The *Welcome Aboard* workshop is designed to assist in minimizing the expected and often unexpected stressors associated with adjusting to a new duty station. This presentation provides incoming Marine Corps personnel and their families with current information on military and civilian resources available at their new duty station. Key Volunteers, MCCS, Marine and Family Center staff, and other individuals or organizations regularly assisting military families may also benefit from this presentation on a space available basis. Efforts should be made to ensure the Welcome Aboard Orientation is a memorable event for all those in attendance.

NOTE: The Welcome Aboard presentation is unique to each installation. The material and PowerPoint slides provided must be customized to reflect local information.

II. Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this module participants will be able to do the following:

- Demonstrate knowledge of local organizations that directly assist service members and their families.

- Identify the location and services provided by local military and community resources including, but not limited to, MCCS, TRICARE clinics, Child Development Center, Legal, educational and recreational facilities.
- Describe at least two issues of which local consumers should be aware.
- Identify at least three landmarks and/or events unique to the area.

III. References

The following materials may be used in preparation of this module. Many are site-specific.

- Local and Base publications/newspapers
- Leatherneck Magazine
- Area maps
- MCCS at <http://www.usmc-mccs.org/index.html>
- SITES at <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/sites>
- State and local Department of Transportation, Board of Elections, and Department of Education websites/publications
- MCO P1320.11E of 21 July 1996, Personnel Sponsorship Program
- MCO P1700. 24B of 27 December 2001, Personal Services Manual

IV. Preparation and Procedures

- **Marketing/Target Audience:** This workshop is mandated by MCO P1320.11E. The target audience is all newcomers to the installation – military personnel and spouses. Market through unit leadership and sponsors. Marketing posters and flyers should be provided to commands and posted on a regular basis. Base marquees, newsletters, and base newspaper should be utilized as well. Also, the Temporary Lodging Facility, Child Development Center, and Commissary/Exchange are excellent places to market this workshop.

- **Module Length:** 1.5 - 4 hours depending on whether there are guest speakers and the amount of local information. Guest speakers are highly recommended and should be the principal staff officer/head of section or their deputy to ensure thorough knowledge to answer a wide variety of questions. This could be a full-day workshop if lunch and/or base or area tour is included.
- **Training Considerations/Options:** There are numerous formats in which to present or enhance the *Welcome Aboard* content.
 1. **Stand-alone workshop:** The basic content can be presented as an “all-comers” workshop or presented at the request of commands or units with a large number of new personnel.
 2. **Welcome Aboard videos** for most installations are available through Tobyhanna DAVIS/DITIS (The Defense Automated Visual Information System/Defense Instructional Technology Information System) at <http://dodimagery.afis.osd.mil/davis/>. Consider adding a video to the workshop.
 3. **Guest speakers:** Various guest speakers can be invited to give short presentations within the basic workshop. Consider speakers from Base Legal, Housing, Chaplain, Semper Fit, Child Development Center or Single Marine Program.
 4. **Tour:** A tour of the base and/or local community gives participants an opportunity to see the area and meet other newcomers. A dynamic and well-informed tour guide is key to success. The tour may take place on the same day as the workshop, or offered on a monthly or bi-weekly basis.
 5. The *Welcome Aboard* workshop can be incorporated into an Information Fair format. This requires substantial logistical coordination but it enables participants to get additional information on programs and services at their own pace and interest. It can be a combination of presentations and information stations (booths). Using both venues will promote maximum benefit for the participants. Information Fair booths can be available to the participants during breaks and 15 minutes before and after the orientation. Ensure that knowledgeable personnel occupy the information booths. If unable to participate, ensure that flyers or other materials from the organizations are available for distribution. Also, to encourage participants to visit the different booths, offer incentives such as small prizes or gift certificates. For participants to obtain a prize or qualify for door prizes, they should verify that they have obtained information from a certain number of booths (can be a simple printed list or a bingo game card that the booth attendant signs).

Welcome Aboard Training Materials/Tools

Equipment/Materials

- Tables and chairs to accommodate all participants
- Separate table for resource material. Additional tables may be needed for speakers to display information from their organizations.
- Name tents or name tags (optional)
- Pencils
- Markers
- Computer/laptop, projector, and screen (PowerPoint capable)
- PowerPoint slides
- White board or chart paper
- Sign-in sheet
- Welcome Aboard video and video projector (optional)
- CD player (optional) to play background music (e.g. Sousa Marches) before and after the orientation and during breaks)

Handouts (Should be available at each seat or handed to each participant upon arrival.)

- Program Evaluation (Page A-1)
- Listing of Local area resources with websites, phone numbers, addresses, and points of contact

NOTE: Inclusion of site-specific handouts and resource materials for the Welcome Aboard workshop are at the discretion of RAP staff.

Resource Materials

If not using the Information Fair format, be sure to have a resource table available. Materials may include multiple copies of handouts for participants to take with them or single copies of books, pamphlets, or videos for participants to look at. Include materials from other organizations.

Suggested resource materials include the following:

- SITES booklet for local area
- Local area information including, for example, TRICARE, Semper Fit, voting requirements, vehicle registration forms
- Base and local maps
- Marine and Family Resources newsletter and program brochures
- Welcome Aboard Packet

6. **Sponsorship:** Often community businesses/organizations may be willing to provide refreshments, publicity, or small gifts/give aways. It is important that everyone (sponsor, participants) understand that sponsorship does not imply Federal or Marine Corps endorsement. Before pursuing sponsorship, check with your installation Legal Services.
- **Registration:** Registration is suggested to ensure you have an adequate number of materials on hand and to further ensure guest speakers are prepared should they have handouts/giveaways for their audience. Registration should be required if bus tour or lunch is being provided. Program registrants should be contacted by phone or email two to three days before the workshop to verify participation. Sign-in is advised to track attendance against the mandatory requirement for all new personnel to attend.
 - **Training Materials and Tools:** All handouts should be placed at each seat or given to participants at the beginning of the workshop. It is helpful to put handouts in the order that you will be using them.

V. Key Terms

- **Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS)** - MCCS programs and services provide for basic life needs, such as food and clothing; social and recreational needs; and prevention and intervention programs. Includes Marine and Family Services, Semper Fit, Marine Corps Family Team Building, and other support services.
- **Marine and Family Services** - Provides programs and services to prevent problems which detract from unit performance and readiness, and to cope successfully with Marine Corps life. Includes counseling, victim advocacy, relocation, family member employment, financial education, and Exceptional Family Member Program.
- **Navy Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS)** - Provides emergency financial assistance to military members and their families in the form of interest-free loans, grants, or combinations. Assistance is available for expenses such as: emergency transportation, funeral expenses, food, rent, and utilities. Non-emergency assistance includes education loans, Visiting Nurse, layettes and Budgeting for Baby classes.
- **CDC - Child Development Center.** The Child Development program offers affordable, quality care for children to include center-based care, after-school programs, and in-home care by licensed providers.
- **Semper Fit** - Provides Marine Corps resources to promote healthy lifestyles through fitness, health promotion, sports, and leisure programs.

VI. Curriculum Outline

- Introduction (5 minutes)
- Administration (5 minutes)
- Welcome Aboard Topics (40 minutes to 2 hours)
 - General area orientation including cities/towns, transportation, population, medical resources, emergency services, other bases
 - Military support services
 - Residency
 - Education
 - Voting
 - Vehicle information
 - Legal
 - Consumer awareness
 - Area activities including shopping, recreation, attractions
- Summary (5-10 minutes)
 - Questions
 - Program evaluation

VII. Curriculum Detail

1

Introduction

NOTE: This module is intended to be customized. All slides should be modified to reflect the unique nature of each installation, region, and the specific services available.

WELCOME participants to the *Welcome Aboard* presentation.

TELL participants your name, position, and title. Include your experience working with military families and your relocation experience. Share how long you have lived in the local area.

SAY As Marine Corps personnel and family members, our lives are somewhat unusual and often incomprehensible to our friends and families back home. How can anyone volunteer to relocate every three years or so? Perhaps they don't understand your sense

of adventure and the benefits of seeing new places and making new friends.

Today’s workshop is designed to help you acclimate to your new community. Now that you have unpacked, you are probably ready to get acquainted with the area, familiarize yourself with the military and civilian resources available to you, and to discover the hidden treasures of life here in _____. Regardless of the length of your tour here, it will be your “home” for the duration. Please feel free to ask questions and share your experiences. We can all learn from each other.

2

NOTE: If the group is not too large, spend a few minutes on participant introductions. There are several ways to do this. Participants can just state their name and something about themselves such as their number of military moves, their last duty station, or what they’re looking forward to in this community. Or, participants can take a minute to talk with the person sitting next to him/her and then introduce that person to the group. If you have distributed name tags, check to see that everyone has one.

Administration

REVIEW the following information with participants:

- Breaks. As this is an approximately 2 hour workshop, a short break should be included. Provide directions to the restrooms and, if possible, offer refreshments to the participants.
- Sign-in sheet. Ask participants to complete the sign-in sheet if they did not do so upon arrival.
- Participant materials. Tell participants that the materials they received will be reviewed during the workshop.
- Resource materials. Note that resource materials are available for participants to look at after the workshop. Indicate where the materials are located.

NOTE: At the end of Administrative remarks and before you begin the General Orientation, invite the installation commander to provide a welcome of his or her own. This engages the commander in the welcome process and facilitates staff participation.

3**General Orientation**

SAY Let's start by getting oriented to the area.

SHOW an easy to read map of your installation and of the community (provide copies for participants). Have a "you are here" marker on each map and walk participants through a brief tour of the surrounding area. Be sure to highlight Marine and Family Services, Exchange, Commissary, Semper Fit facilities, and CDC locations. Use the community map to show the location of the installation in relation to the greater community.

Optional Activity: Distribute an unlabeled map of the area. Make a list of 15-20 important locations including base, highways, shopping, medical facilities, etc. Have participants label the map putting the items in the right locations. Then review.

Population: Include the following information on area population:

- Population size.
- Population demographics such as age, minority composition, marital status.
- Where to obtain census information.

NOTE: Contact your local census bureau or base Public Affairs Office for population information.

4

Transportation: Include the following transportation information:

- Public transportation - phone numbers, websites and current schedules.
- Carpool contacts.
- Base transportation.
- Traffic reporting resources.
- Department of Transportation website.
- Transportation in and out of area - airport, bus station, train depot.

Medical and Dental: Include the following medical/dental information:

- DISTRIBUTE brochures and flyers from TRICARE and military medical facilities (if available).
- Locations of military medical facilities including dental clinic.
- TRICARE - Health Benefits Advisor offices, local enrollment, approved clinics.
- TRICARE dental - Value of program, enrollment, contacts - (800) 866-8499 or www.ucci.com.
- Community healthcare facilities.
- Military veterinary services.

Emergency Services: Include the following information on emergency services.

- PMO and local police information.
- Fire department and rescue information.
- Navy Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) - Provides emergency financial assistance to military members and their families in the form of interest-free loans, grants, or combinations. Assistance is available for expenses such as: emergency transportation, funeral expenses, food, rent, and utilities. Non-emergency assistance includes education loans, Visiting Nurse, layettes and Budgeting for Baby classes.
- American Red Cross. Services include emergency notification in the event of illness, death or family emergency, health and welfare inquiries, information and referral, emergency financial assistance, health and safety courses.

Military bases in the area: If there are other military bases (Army, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard) within a 25-50 mile radius of your installation, provide information on how to get there and what each has to offer. This is particularly helpful if commonly used medical facilities or commissaries are located at another installation. Additionally, you may want to identify family support centers. Ensure that participants understand that reciprocal agreements exist that allow them to access other support facilities.

5

Military Support Services

NOTE: Refer to local listings of military resource facilities in your area. Distribute a list that includes websites, phone numbers, addresses, and points of contact for relevant resources.

SAY Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS) programs and services provide for basic life needs, such as food and clothing; social and recreational needs; and prevention and intervention programs. MCCS includes Marine and Family Services, Semper Fit, Marine Corps Family Team Building, and other support services.

NOTE: For all of the following be sure to emphasize the unique programs and services provided locally. Include contact information.

6

DESCRIBE the following MCCS services available to participants.

- Marine and Family Services:
 - New Parent Support Program
 - Relocation Assistance Program
 - Family Member Employment Assistance Program
 - Volunteer Opportunities
 - Financial Education/Counseling
 - Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)
 - Clinical Counseling
 - Information & Referral
 - Lifelong Learning

7

- Semper Fit: Promotes healthy lifestyles through fitness, health promotion, sports, and leisure programs. The goal is to continuously improve the use of, and trends in, healthy lifestyles. Semper FIT includes team and individual sporting events and leagues, and recreational activities including everything from chess to hiking.

8

- Single Marine Program (SMP): Fifty-five percent of the Marine Corps is single. The SMP addresses the specific quality of life concerns and issues of single Marines, geographical bachelors, and single parents. SMP activities are as varied as the single Marines the program serves, because the program belongs to the Marines. Activities range from recreational and sports, health and wellness, life skills, career progression, community involvement, and addressing quality of life issues.

Most importantly, the program creates a communication channel between single Marines and their chain of command. To learn more about the Single Marine Program, contact the SMP Coordinator on base.

- 9

▪ **Marine Corps Family Team Building (MCFTB):** MCFTB provides educational resources and services to foster personal growth and enhance the readiness of Marine Corps families. It is comprised of the following: Key Volunteer Network (KVN); Lifestyle, Insights, Networking, Knowledge and Skills (L.I.N.K.S.); Spouses’ Leadership Seminar (SLS); Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP); and Chaplains Religious Enrichment and Development Operation (CREDO).
- 10

▪ **Children, Youth, and Teen Programs:** These programs focus on the needs of families in order to provide maximum access to useful, flexible, and affordable programs such as child development, social, recreational, and athletic programs. Children, youth and teens, ages 6 weeks to 18 years are served in integrated, balanced, quality programs that support the continuum of the Marines family, on and off base.

NOTE: Child Care is an important topic and can generate a great deal of discussion (especially if childcare is difficult to come by in your area). Provide participants with the local contact information for the Child Development Center and Child Care Resource & Referral (may be co-located with CDC and can also provide state and local agency information).

Residency

SAY Before we discuss additional community information, let’s take a few minutes and look at residency. Military members have the option of “legal residence” in one state and being stationed in a different state. The Servicemembers Civil Relief Act allows military members to pay taxes, register vehicles, and vote among other things, in their “state of legal residence,” rather than in the state where they are stationed. This can sometimes result in a tax advantage because several states exempt military pay from state taxes.

NOTE: Residency is chosen more often than not for tax advantages or potential college tuition breaks. If your state is popular for this reason, get the facts and present them here.

12

Voting

Contact your local Board of Elections to obtain information on voter registration. Include residency and other information and requirements. If possible, have voter registration forms available.

Schools/Education

Provide participants with an overview of options and contact information for schools in your area. Include the following information:

- School enrollment requirements – usually include certified birth certificate, shot record, proof of address and/or proof of custody.
- State/local testing requirements.
- Services and programs available in each district.
- Private/parochial school availability.

Adult Education: Highlight options available on your installation and within your community for continuing personal or professional education for adults. Include contact information on local colleges/universities, English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, vocational/technical centers, and community adult learning centers.

NOTE: Be sure to include information on tuition at state institutions. Qualifying varies greatly from state to state. Most states require residency for at least one year prior to eligibility for in-state rates.

13

Vehicle Information

There are a number of considerations and various state requirements when it comes to registering your car. Many states exempt personal property tax if the vehicle is owned and registered solely in the service member's name. Include local information on the following issues:

- State driver's license requirements.
- Vehicle registration requirements and fees.

- Personal Property Tax.
- State Inspections.
- Radar Detection Devices.
- Seat belt and car seat laws.
- Insurance requirements.
- Base Registration - Base decals are required at all installations. Must have car registration, proof of insurance, military ID card, and safety inspection sticker (if required in the state in which the vehicle is registered).

Legal Services

14

Legal Services provides quality services regarding personal civil legal matters, personal legal rights and responsibilities.

DESCRIBE the following services offered through Legal Services:

- Power of Attorney.
- Notary Services.
- General Assistance (contract review, wills, divorce, adoption, etc.).
- Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA).
- Landlord-tenant relations including leases.
- Civilian criminal misdemeanor matters such as traffic offenses (limited to general advice).

Consumer Awareness

15

SAY Unfortunately, dishonest solicitors and merchants often target our nation's service members. From shady car dealers promising E-1 financing, to payday loan companies offering quick cash, the temptations (often steps from the main gate) are overwhelming while the repercussions can be devastating. In an effort to ensure that you and your family don't become victims of these unscrupulous practices, the following details important consumer tips, resources and consumer legislation you should know.

NOTE: Be sure to distribute a list of tips, resources and applicable legislation (including websites, phone numbers, addresses and points of contact) regarding your area's consumer protection laws. For additional information regarding consumer issues in your area, speak with your Personal Financial Management staff or contact your base Legal Office.

Include the following information:

- Local military rip-offs. May include car buying, car repairs, rent-to-own-deals, advance fee or payday loans.
- Local military off-limits list. Contact Legal for "off-limits" list and encourage participants to beware of title loan companies, payday loan scams and furniture/appliance rent-to-own establishments. Remember "If it sounds too good to be true, IT IS!"
- Usury Laws. Convey whether or not interest rates are capped. This information can be easily accessed through your base Legal Office. Warn participants that if there are no Usury Laws in your state, they must be **VERY** careful about signing any contracts. Encourage them to bring all home, car or other legally binding contracts to Legal for review before signing. This service is free of charge and could ultimately save them a lot of money and potential heartache.
- "Cooling off" periods for contracts. Ensure participants are aware that in most states any contract signed in the merchant's place of business is **LEGALLY BINDING**. This includes car sales. There are limited cooling off periods for door-to-door magazine sales, campground memberships, timeshares and health club memberships, but again...**BUYER BEWARE!**
- Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA). On December 19, 2003, the President signed into law the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) Public Law No. 108-189 completely revising the old law (previously known as the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act). The purpose of the act is to provide for the temporary suspension of judicial and administrative proceedings and transactions that may adversely affect service members during their military service, thereby enabling them to devote their energy to the defense needs of the United States.
- Car sales and repairs. Many states (but not all) have auto repair services legislation that mandates an estimate from mechanics within 10% of the final cost before proceeding with repairs. For auto repair legislation in your state, go to your state's Department of Motor Vehicles website.

SAY Military Sentinel is a project of the Federal Trade Commission and the Department of Defense to identify and target consumer protection issues that affect members of the United States Armed Forces and their families. You can file a consumer complaint electronically by going to <http://www.consumer.gov/military/> and clicking on your service seal. This will link you to the consumer complaint forms.

16

NOTE: Encourage participants to visit the Marine and Family Services Personal Financial Management staff or the Legal Office to learn more about consumer rights.

Area Activities

17

Include the following when discussing cultural, recreational, and activities specific to the area.

- Unique customs and traditions. Examples of unique customs and traditions include, but are not limited to, local food, historical celebrations, cultural diversity, music, and language and sayings. Investigate your community and share what sets it apart from other military towns.

NOTE: This is a great opportunity to share a bit of local customs or culture. Provide a snack of local food (include a recipe as well) or play local music.

DESCRIBE the activities available in the community. If possible, have a guest speaker from Semper Fit or Recreation Services to discuss on-base recreational and sports programs, and off-base excursions. At a minimum, highlight:

18

- Shopping.
- Recreation (on and off base resources).
- Cultural attractions (museums and historic landmarks).
- Restaurants.
- Fun activities for children.
- Sports arenas, convention centers, concert venues.

- Annual festivals and events.

NOTE: This is your opportunity to share all that's great about your community. Have a "calendar of events" and brochures and handouts from area attractions. Many attractions will give you discount coupons.

SAY Welcome again to (name of community), your new hometown!

19

NOTE: If customizing this slide include the following message:
Enjoy Your New Home In _____!

20

Summary

SAY We've covered a lot of material. Before we conclude, does anyone have any questions?

SAY If there are no more questions, could you please take a few minutes and complete the program evaluation. When you've completed this, please return it to me. And, please stop by the resource table and look at the materials.

THANK the participants for attending.

VIII. Quality Assurance Procedures

To assure accurate and current information as well as a quality presentation, the following should be completed:

- Review and update the curriculum annually.
- Distribute program evaluations to participants after each workshop. Results should be tabulated and retained to measure the effectiveness of information disseminated, workshop content, and delivery of presentation.
- Observe and evaluate the program annually. This should be done by the RAP supervisor. Both program content and the presenter's effectiveness should be included in the evaluation.

IX. PowerPoint Slides

A PowerPoint slide presentation can be found directly after the following section. The slides are printed three to a page with space to the right of each slide for presenter's notes and are designed to emphasize the main points of the presentation. This workshop can be presented without use of the slides.

X. Instructional Materials

Handouts:

- Program Evaluation (Page A-1)
- Listing of local area resources with websites, phone numbers, addresses, and contact information.

