

# CIVILIAN MARINE

## Career & Leadership Development

### INSTITUTIONALIZING THE CONCEPT OF CIVILIAN MARINE

By General Michael J. Williams

*General Williams assumed his current position as Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps in September 2000. The following are excerpts from his remarks to a Department of Navy Senior Executive Service Seminar on 23 May 2002*



Marine Corps efforts to emphasize the critical role of the Marine civil servant are well underway. We've always appreciated the importance of civilian Marines, but the emphasis has been on our active duty force.

It's time to recognize the rest of the team. We want to foster a culture of inclusiveness, a culture where the concept of total force is real. That concept can be seen in both tangible and intangible ways. It includes encouraging civilian Marine participation in professional military education seminars and base formal and informal social activities, such as "hail and farewells," retirement, and promotion ceremonies. It also means extending appropriate courtesies for senior civilians. For example, our SES civilians are included as full participants in our annual General Officers Symposium.

We are institutionalizing the concept of civilian Marine through numerous initiatives that underscore how we value their contributions. We also want to invest in the development of their careers. Recently we established civilian workforce Communities of Interest (COI) with a senior civilian heading each community. With

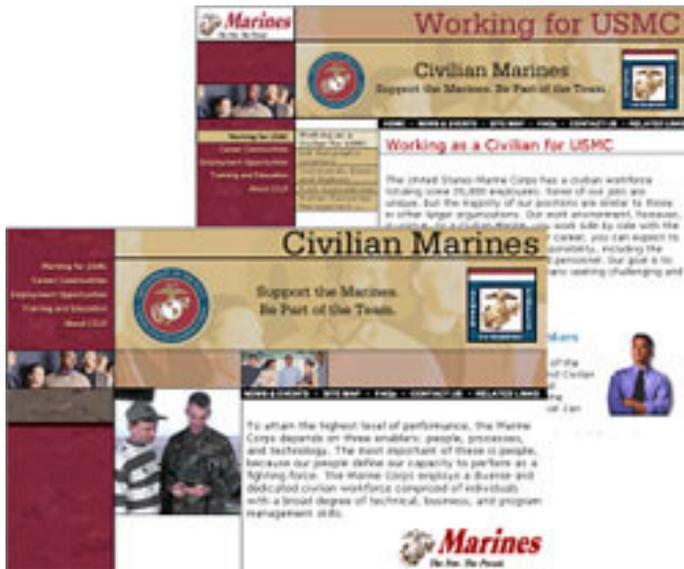
contract support, Manpower and Reserve Affairs staff and the COI working groups are establishing the work competencies, the training required to achieve them, and an appropriate career path for each civilian specialty. We view the COIs just as we do our military occupational fields, and we need to manage and support them accordingly.

We publish a quarterly newsletter, and will soon have a web site that will keep the civilian Marine workforce updated with COI information, messages from the military and civilian leadership on upcoming business process improvements and initiatives, as well as strategic plan requirements and implementation status.

A mentoring handbook was recently developed and is now available through local Civilian Leadership Development Coordinators. This valuable tool is a guide for both employees and supervisors to establish meaningful and productive mentoring relationships. It has been our goal to increase participation of civilians in leadership development and we've done this by centrally funding tuition, travel and per diem costs, as well as by streamlining application processes.

We are working very hard to ensure a one team, one force concept. As the Commandant pointed out in his 1 March message, "**All have something unique to offer in forging success. Our civilian work force provides an element of critical continuity.**" I look forward to the many changes that our Civilian Career and Leadership Development program will bring, and I promise to do everything I can to ensure every civilian Marine is a full "part of the team."

## CIVILIAN MARINE WEB SITE



The Civilian Career and Leadership Development Branch announced this month that a civilian Marine web site is available to all civilian Marines as well as to the general public. The site was designed to provide information pertinent to those already in the USMC family as well as those contemplating starting a career as a civilian working for the Marine Corps.

The Civilian Marines web site is accessed directly from the USMC home page. The site offers a comprehensive and in-depth look at the life of our civilian Marines. In addition to describing the uniqueness of our environment, the site enables visitors to access information about career opportunities, including the ability to search for jobs, both civil service and NAFI. It has a wealth of information and links on the various human resources and quality of work life programs.

The site also has an extensive section on training and education covering training resources, links to distance learning, and a link to a leadership skills assessment instrument. The section on career communities will include the competencies, career

maps and training requirements for the 20 Communities of Interest as they are developed.

Explore this exciting web site (<https://osprey.manpower.usmc.mil/CCLD/index.htm>) and be sure to let us know what you think. This is just another way your Marine Corps is changing to better serve you, the civilian Marine!

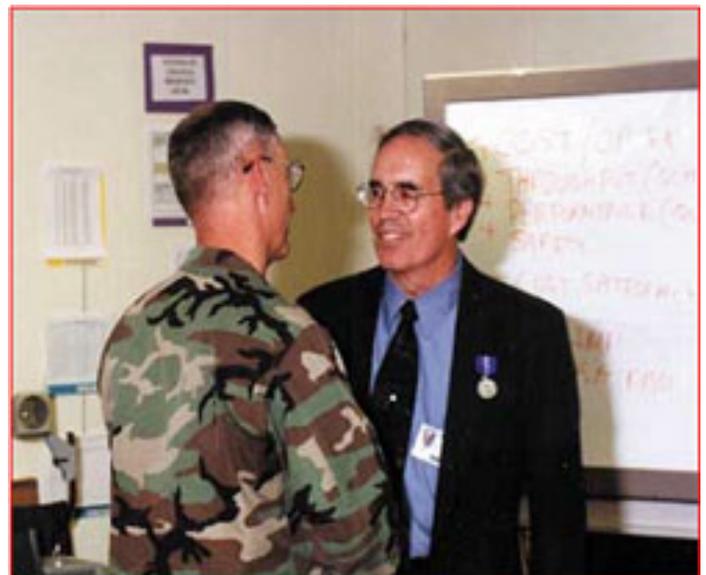
## CIVILIAN MARINES IN THE SPOTLIGHT:

### MCLB Deputy Commander Receives High Honor

By Rob Jackson

*Marine Corps Logistics Base, Barstow California*

The highest-level award the Commandant of the Marine Corps can bestow on a civilian employee was recently presented to one of Maintenance Center Barstow's own. Gary Baker, deputy commander of MCLB, Barstow was



**Brigadier General Richard Kramlich, Commander MARCORLOG Bases, Congratulates Gary Baker, Deputy Commander MCLB, Barstow after presenting him with the Civilian Superior Service Award**

awarded the United States Marine Corps Award for Superior Civilian Service. Brigadier General Richard Kramlich, commander MARCORLOG Bases, presented the award during a ceremony held at the Maintenance Center.

As one of the main catalysts behind the MCB's continued success, Baker was cited for "his balance of leadership and management skills that enabled MCB to successfully obtain ISO 9000 qualification." Baker explained, "We had been working on that for several years and it was a real struggle because it was a culture change, going from what you might say was an informal system, to a formal system where everything you do that's related to quality is documented. It describes how you're going to go about doing things and you follow those procedures that are now in writing."

The citation also noted that Mr. Baker was instrumental in implementing the Theory of Constraints, which is a manufacturing and remanufacturing philosophy focused on getting products out the door. "That philosophy tries to get you 'out of the weeds' of focusing on other things that are significant but are not the prime constituents for pushing products out the door," the deputy commander said. "It tells you that as a business you need to concentrate on three things; your throughput; operating expenses; and inventory, with throughput being the most significant. The theory says that if you concentrate on throughput your other measures, that typically measure a business, will fall in line."

Baker noted Dr. Eli Goldratt, author of *The Goal* developed this philosophy nearly 20 years ago and that a lot of businesses have been very successful employing these philosophies and theories. Educating MCB personnel on this theory is still an ongoing process.

The deputy commander emphasized that everything MCB does depends on people. "Unlike new manufacture, our operations in remanufacture are people-intensive," he said. "Because we disassemble old equipment, we have to make decisions about what we're going to do with many

of those things, in terms of processing, and it all relies on people."

Having worked at the Maintenance Center for nearly 26 years, first as an industrial engineer and now as deputy commander, Gary Baker still enjoys his work and is still smiling. "One of the things I really enjoy is producing products and seeing them go out the door," he explained. "Although my job now involves a lot of paper work, the fact that what we do here as an organization is produce products that actually get used by Marines and other service members, that's what I really enjoy."

Receiving the award was a real surprise. Mr. Baker felt honored and at the same time he felt humility. "It was a real honor to receive that award from the commandant, but at the same time I don't do anything here by myself. Everything that's done here we do as a team, and we try to impress this upon everyone here. It takes a tremendous amount of people working together."

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## MARINES TEAMS TRAIN TOGETHER

By Janet Bedwell

The Marine Corps Reserve Support Command (MCRSC) in Kansas City, MO is presenting teamwork classes to all of its personnel as part of its ongoing customer service enhancement plan. Classes emphasize the individuality of team members and show that by better understanding each other and identifying and capitalizing on our differences, a group's efficiency in working together is enhanced.

Teamwork is an essential part of completing our mission. With the fast-paced, always changing technology services available, working in synchronization creates an atmosphere that generates new ideas and moves people to think proactively and be better prepared for imminent customer needs on the horizon.

Teamwork classes are attended by small groups of Marines and civilian Marines who already work together. They are taken out of their natural work environment and put into a setting unrelated to normal tasks and processes. Activities are new to the entire group, so this creates an equality of knowledge and skill.



**Total Force Branch personnel plotting the correct course through a "swamp of alligators" using boards to move the team and ensuring no members fall into the swamp.**

Before beginning the physical activities, a personal assessment is administered to each member. The profile identifies their personal work principles and values by describing their business method preferences and dislikes, their behavioral strengths, how they tend to react under pressure, their value to the Command and how they influence others. Each team member reviews their own profile and then the entire group discusses it. After all the profiles have been reviewed, the team discusses how to make their work environment the most conducive for success and maximum productivity.

Physical activities are presented to emphasize the importance of cooperation and working together as a team over personal strength or agility. By completing activities that are not work-related, personnel see each other in a different perspective, notice traits that are often overlooked in the

workplace, express new behaviors, and create a trust factor among team members.

The exercises are physical, spirited scenarios that take the entire team to accomplish. They focus on team building, problem solving, decision-making and communication skills. Activities promote the importance of teamwork in two ways: physically getting a job done that is beyond any individual's capabilities and, the importance of the way members communicate and treat each other. Those who do not wish to participate in the physical aspect of an exercise still contribute to the activity by being part of the planning process and "coaching from the sidelines." This mirrors the everyday working environment of the team. Everyone works together no matter what "uniform" they're wearing. The politics of the office are removed and people tend to have fun, remember the strengths each brought to the team, and how each member performed.

Teamwork classes were initiated in an effort to improve the command's customer service. Working together more effectively and enjoying the workplace improves the team members' attitudes, thus improving the relationships with customers. When they return to their duty sections they say they work together more efficiently, assisting each other more effectively with knowledge and understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. Instruction such as this reminds us that our customers are not record books, files, or database entries. Our customers are Marines and the Marines we support become more aware of having a "team" available to them. As a result, contact with MCRSC will continually be more productive and enjoyable.

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**Key "Word":**

**T-E-A-M-W-O-R-K**

**"A team is a small number of people with complementary skills committed to a common purpose, performance goals and approach for which each team member holds himself or herself accountable."**

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**T**eams have always been the most effective unit for efficiently accomplishing complex or difficult tasks. The concept of “team” is frequently given only lip service within organizations that haven’t recognized their capacity for high performance. But all Marines and civilian Marines know that the collective work of a team ultimately yields an output greater than the sum capability of its members working independently. Teamwork is a critical part of our culture, and a key enabling capability for accomplishing the Marine Corps mission. As such, it warrants our examination in some detail.

A team is that small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and an approach for which each team member holds himself or herself mutually accountable.



Working groups usually have a transient existence and its members retain their individual accountability and perspective, and typically contribute representative expertise and input on behalf of their parent organization. A team has a shared vision, goal, and a common allegiance or commitment. Without that commitment, a group is just a collection of individuals working together, but separately.

On the surface it may not seem like much of a factor, but mutual accountability can lead to astonishing results. It enables the team to achieve performance levels that are far greater than the best of any single member of the team. But to achieve their full potential as a team, the team’s membership must do more than just listen and follow orders. They must provide constructive feedback and mutual support to one another. In addition to sharing a vision and a commitment to

the team, members must share the following essential disciplines:

- **Sense of a meaningful common purpose**
- **Specific performance goals that support and measure progress toward the common purpose**
- **A mix of complementary skills**
- **A strong commitment that the team’s work gets done**
- **Mutual accountability**

Our challenge is to build effective teams without falling into the trap of promoting teams for their own sake. Focus must remain on performance. If that focus is missing, we are really only touting another management fad.

Some essential components to building successful team performance include:

- **Establish a sense of urgency, demanding performance standards and direction.**
- **Select members based on possession of requisite skill or potential, not personality.**
- **Motivate or eliminate any “virtual” team members as soon as possible—they will be a drag on the team. Enthusiasm is contagious, but so is cynicism.**
- **Pay particular attention to the organization and conduct of first meetings. Ensure they result in actionable activities.**
- **Set clear ground rules.**
- **Step out smartly--seize on a few immediate or short-term performance oriented tasks and goals to quickly develop confidence and a habit of success.**

- **Challenge your team regularly with fresh facts and information.**
- **Spend a lot of time together.**
- **Exploit the power of positive feedback, recognition and reward.**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century presents us with new demands and new challenges. The war on terrorism is not conventional or traditionally organized. The Marine Corps team must be ready, organized and supportive to meet the economic and social demands of our ever-changing environment. Your commitment, performance and dedication to the mission and vision of the Marine Corps remain paramount. **Support the Marines. Be Part of the Team!**

Ref: Creating Powerful Teams, July 2001, Leadership Advantage, Olney, MD

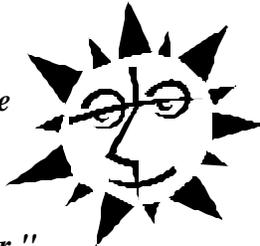
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### **Closing Thought:**

*"Teamwork means that we share a common idea and embrace a common goal. Teamwork can be summed up in five short words... we believe in each other."*

*-- Source Unknown*

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