

CAREER NEWSFLASH



MMEA-64

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EDITORIAL



Another year has come and gone with its share of changes that pertain to careers. We have been very aggressive in the past year and have spent quite some time on the road counseling Marines and providing briefs as well.

Maradmin 447/02 announced that the E9/E8 Selection Board for 2004 will now convene in October 2003, making it a fiscal year from here on out. The fitness report cycle for annual reports will have some changes that will be published soon by MMSB, look for them and ensure that your reports get submitted in a timely manner.

On another note, we talk to many Marines who do not get signed copies of their reports as required by order. When the Reporting Senior signs the certification block of the report (J1/Fitrep), he or she is certifying that the MRO has already been given a signed copy as of that date, not at a later date or when the RO has signed it. This needs to happen and our leadership needs to facilitate this. Having a signed copy will be a big help in resolving date gaps which do not work for you.

It is also a requirement to submit a promotion photograph and to be considered fully qualified for promotion, to complete at least the minimum PME. Why is this not getting done? This is old news that we keep revisiting. What is ironic, is that some Reporting Seniors continue to give Marines competitive grades in the PME are of their evaluations even though they have not even enrolled or completed the minimum required PME for the next higher grade. We have provided a chart at the end of this editorial to illustrate that we are not where we should be. It is the task of the leadership to ensure that our Marines do their part, at least the bare minimum. It is your career, what message do you want to send the selection boards?

The Martial Arts Program requires that all Marines be certified, it is a good idea to ensure that your Martial Arts certification be entered in your Master Brief Sheet as well as your OMPF in addition to the MCTFS/3270. Never rely on one aspect of your record alone.

This year will bring its share of challenge with our operational tempo, leaders need to be very vigilant in ensuring that our Marines are fully prepared for selection boards before any upcoming deployment. The last

minute is not the moment to get things verified or corrected. The E9/E8 Selection Board convenes on 6 January, we have been answering calls from many In Zone that are not too sure if their records are accurate. Today, it is easier than ever to verify our records, they are provided on CD ROM and paper and there is no dependency on the old microfiche machines that were next to impossible to find in the old days. It is not the job of a Career Counselor to verify the accuracy of your record, this is the individual and the commands responsibility in accordance with MCBUL 1430. Our primary mission is to give

your counsel, sound advice that will improve your overall competitiveness for promotion. Trying to fight last minute fires takes away from assisting Marines that are trying to be proactive and call us one to two year's out as they should be.

Wishing all a good year in their careers, we look forward to bringing the word to you as it is, without hype or fancy talk, just as it is.

Semper Fidelis

Enlisted Career Counselors, HQMC

CY 2001 & 2002 Roll-Up						
Photo Submission, PME Completion and In Zone Selection Rate						
CY 01	SGTMAJ	MGYSGT	1ST SGT	MSGT	GYSGT	SSGT
IN ZONE PHOTO	97.1%	89.9%	80.7%	78.6%	87.1%	83.7%
IN ZONE PME	67.2%	86.8%	74.3%	81.4%	98.4%	94.8%
IN ZONE SELECTS	59.0%	57.7%	15.4%	62.9%	55.9%	71.3%
CY 02	SGTMAJ	MGYSGT	1ST SGT	MSGT	GYSGT	SSGT
IN ZONE PHOTO	92.2%	87.8%	84.7%	84.0%	85.9%	85.7%
IN ZONE PME	100.0%	100.0%	80.7%	81.4%	98.0%	94.9%
IN ZONE SELECTS	50.0%	49.5%	14.5%	60.0%	56.1%	73.1%

SOME NOTES ON THE ABOVE TABLE

Submitting a photograph for promotion in the prescribed uniform, is a requirement in accordance with the IRAM. Digital photographs now have a 12 month shelf-life, there is no reason for not having one in your OMPF.

The PME numbers above shows the minimum required PME for the next grade by Marines that were In Zone. Though the minimum PME is the

requirement, you should be improving your overall competitiveness by going over and above.

The In Zone Selects simply shows the amount of Marines selected from the Promotion Zone based on the Marines considered in the same. The selection boards can select from the Above Zone and In Zone freely, the Below Zone has a cap for selection of 1 or no more than 5% of the allocations that year.

COUNSELING & BEING COUNSELED - II

In the last issue, we discussed some of what performance counseling is all about. This is the second article in that series and here, we hope to bring into perspective the spectrum of elements that span the width from counseling to mentoring. Firstly, we must always remember that counseling is not only corrective or situational but, a means to develop effort and unleash potential. Counseling is for everyone, regardless of their capability and potential. Counseling is coaching, this is the bottom line. Too often, either ego or the lack of wanting to make recommendations for some reason or the other seems to prevent those that are already performing superbly from being counseled in-depth. Counseling is applicable to all and needed by all, it is a leadership function that is vital to developing subordinates at every level. In this article, we will quickly go through all the actually comprises of counseling and then go in-depth into what mentoring is really all about.

The spectrum of counseling can be looked at in four stages, in this article; we will examine each stage separately and also see how each should eventually lead to the other. It is important to remember that neither of the stages mentioned below show the mark of a better leader, you have to use the appropriate method for the individual being coached or counseled with the door always open and ready towards the next step.

1. Evaluation Based.
2. Tasks or Expectation Based.
3. Area Based.
4. Potential Based.

EVALUATION BASED

This is generally feedback given to relatively junior Marines as it focuses on what needs to be done to raise the evaluations that

Evaluation Based

This is generally feedback given to relatively junior Marines as it focuses on what needs to be done to raise the evaluations that the Marine has been achieving.

the Marine has been achieving. Evaluations become the anchor to which all feedback is given. Since each Senior Marine seeks to first see performance, evaluations usually follow at the end of the period observed. Hence, it can be said to be reactive in nature as it is based on performance already displayed. This is not generally very helpful in understanding what is expected in a broader sense, from a sense of the mission at hand and the leadership expected towards that end. This process however does have its place in counseling very junior Marines but has a much shallower threshold of what can be really accomplished.

TASK OF EXPECTATION BASED

This form of coaching or counseling is tied more closely to the mission on hand and the role of the Marine being counseled in the unit's mission. There is a sharper focus on what is expected based on the solid tasks and expectations with perspective to the time on hand and the quality of results expected. Leaders carefully consider the professional maturity of the Marine being counseled, what they have expected from others of that grade or professional development and what they believe the individual Marine may be able to accomplish. This is a more interactive process as it is based both what the Senior Marine may have observed in the past as well as the share of the mission for the individual Marine being counseled.

A plan towards channeling efforts is carefully laid out and the Marine being counseling is made to understand both, what his or her share of the mission-pie is as well as the standards of performance expected. From that point of initial coaching or counseling, subsequent sessions must provide clarity as to either expectations being met, a change of direction needed with a changing mission as well as the lowering or raising of the bar of

expectations.

From small steps of performance expectations, the Marine being counseled is gradually led by a more in-depth understanding of the mission towards bigger slices of the mission-pie. Development takes place with tangibles and deliverables as the anchor. What is important here is that along with the Senior Marine outlining tasks and expectations, there is also constant teaching and education so the Marine/s being counseled clearly understand what the design of expectations is a few steps ahead. Relying on the premise that with seniority in rank or billet, Marines will or should automatically know standards of performance and bigger slices of the mission-pie is a misnomer that is purely presumptuous and a step backward in leadership. Effective counseling does not presume or assume, it is alive and engaging. It is careful and always ongoing; it does not rest on a general sense of expectations but is specific in nature.

Task or Expectation Based

This form of coaching or counseling is tied more closely to the mission on hand and the role of the Marine being counseled in the unit's mission.

The second step in area based counseling is to discuss the relative strengths and ways to make what already seems to be strong, even stronger. This way of thinking is very akin to our Warfighting Philosophy of 'Soft-Spot Tactics' and will definitely go a long way to conveying intent of the commander also. Here, both; the Senior Marine as well as the Marine being counseled focus on the future completely and by active engagement; discuss improvement that will fill tomorrow's design.

What is not escapable in this process is constant teaching. Sure, Marines learn and enhance their proficiency in the billet performance and leadership as they grow or at least, that is expected. What is important that the Senior Marine holds the standards expected and awareness of the steps ahead and the area between resident skills and expectations must be constantly bridged. Higher thresholds of performance expected as well as changes in direction based on our ever evolving mission also add to uncertainty if not conveyed well.

AREA BASED

Here, we go beyond the mission at hand and coaching is given on areas the individual Marine can develop further. In this process, areas of performance of the individual Marine are put against each other as comparative anchors. Areas of strength that have been displayed are highlighted and areas that need to rise to the same threshold are discussed. Initial focus is given to those areas or aspects of performance such as leading subordinates or proficiency just to name a couple, that seem to be the strongest and what made them seem so from the Senior Marines perspective. Areas that may not have yielded relatively strong results are then discussed and what should be done to bring about some parity in performance, this is the first step in this type of counseling.

Where this type of counseling largely differs from the previous type is that it does not need to be anchored to what is expected. This process forms designs to improve both; relative weaknesses as well as displayed strength for a much higher level of performance.

Area Based

In this process, areas of performance of the individual Marine are put against each other as comparative anchors. Areas of strength that have been displayed are highlighted and areas that need to rise to the same threshold are discussed.

POTENTIAL BASED

The previous three types of counseling or stages in counseling are based in part of whole on performance. Performance that has already been demonstrated or performance that is expected. Potential based counseling is also mentoring, it goes to root of that which unleashes performance, towards the potential that the Marine either is capable of or should strive towards. This process is for those that show the will to clearly breakout from the pack, for the best.

The Marine being counseled or coached here must want more from himself or herself. This is critical as *'Independent Will'* is the only factor that can unleash potential. Very often we find that the best are often given less counseling or coaching, they are given feedback based on how well they may have done and some kudos. This is not enough for them, they need to know how their potential can be maximized based on looking beyond opportunity that is presently on the radar of mission and the tangibles. It is a real challenge for every level of leadership to be a real coach with them. Most offer mere lip-service with compliments and an occasional bit of advice that is carefully wrapped in a lot of positive feedback, this superficial feedback is so well shrouded in all the good, the over and above performing Marine sees no value in it at all. To illustrate some examples; performance cars need the most maintenance, and professional athletes need the best of coaching and facilities.

Here, an understanding of human dynamics is needed. What causes a person to constantly strive towards higher thresholds? Ofcourse, there are some that push the envelope with certain personal achievements in mind but, they cannot truly be ever considered the best of the best as they will dam performance if they do not see what is in it for them. They do not strive to unleash potential but always simply get more for themselves. They are selective performers and unless they raise their way of thinking, they will always hamper their own selves. With those that are rooted more in themselves or simply put, 'What's in it for me', leadership has to be provided towards striving without that expectation or filter as it stifles output, plain and simple. Unleashing potential is a win-win situation but can only be truly be understood by those with a higher way of thinking that extends beyond the horizon of instant gratification and a sense of self-serving. This is why I have mentioned that a study of human dynamics is necessary. The challenge is not only in conveying but somehow causing those that are hampered by a payback of recognition based on their demonstrated achievement to push the envelope without the

strings of constant or immediate recognition holding them back. Not all good performers can or will be freed from their own factors that constantly stifle. One has to want more from themselves, this is the bottom line. Unless there is an element of selflessness and a true spirit to serve both our Marine Corps as well as the Marines as a personal concern, those that are driven by achievement will always fall short. One has to want more from themselves, this is the bottom line. This state will open the door of mentoring from the relatively shallower levels of counseling.

Potential Based

The Marine being counseled or coached here must want more from himself or herself. This is critical as 'Independent Will' is the only factor that can unleash potential.

Along with our Marines wanting more and putting our maximum effort, leaders have also got to be prepared to lead at all levels. There are some leaders that though they appreciate a higher output, are not capable of dealing with what to do next or in how to harness the flowing river that seems to gush in all directions as over-achievers do. It takes wise and effective leaders to lead the best of the best. It takes the ability to recognize that not all will break the thresholds of expectation and create their own standards after which, they will only compete with their own selves. How does one mentor or lead those that are

in a class by themselves and set their own standards? Does simple positive feedback or heaps of accolades answer the need? Not so, this is actually seen as superficial leadership by those that constantly strive towards the highest as they were never rooted in mere accolades to begin with. They like to make a difference and know that they will somehow answer every call. They revel in how they can make a bigger difference, in raising their vision as well as their understanding as a whole. Often over-achievers have been short-changed by weaker leadership. The true test of a leader is not in how he leads generally, but in how he leads those that are truly committed to a higher standard without a self-serving attitude.

This is mentoring and it is not a process for all. Mentoring is not merely setting an example in some areas or an external display of 'Gung-Ho'. It is not the 'be like me attitude based on some drum beating', it is the raising of a personal bar based in a higher way of thinking

and only those leaders that continually strive with that level of selflessness as their basis, can ever understand how to lead those committed to the highest. The best of the best must always be challenged, not by shallowness, but rather, by knowing that there is a higher good in their pushing harder for the Marine Corps that will also develop them as individuals.

Therefore, the first challenge for leaders is to recognize where their Marines are in the professional and personal growth spectrum and apply the specific process towards attaining

more. The second challenge is to be professionally and personally prepared to answer the call of coaching the best. Like they say, be careful what you ask for, we all ask for the best of Marines in our units, are we prepared to lead the best? In the next issue, we will go into the nature of human dynamics that causes one to want more from themselves.

Master Sergeant Anil Lund
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MMEA-64, HQMC

ENLISTED CAREER FORCE CONTROLS - II

In last quarter’s “Career Newsflash” we discussed the history and purpose of the Marine Corps’ Enlisted Career Force Controls (ECFCs). As a quick review, the programs under the ECFC umbrella are: promotion by MOS, variable first time In-Zone selection opportunity, enlisted grade shaping, restrictions on prior service accessions, control of meritorious promotions, the First Term Alignment Plan (FTAP), the Subsequent Term Alignment Plan (STAP), voluntary early transfer to the FMCR program/Enlisted Selective Early Retirement Board (ESERB), and service limits. Last quarter, we discussed in depth enlisted grade shaping, FTAP, and STAP. This quarter we will focus on promotion by MOS, variable first time In-Zone selection opportunity, and service limits.

PROMOTION BY MOS

Marines are promoted by MOS to the grades of Corporal and above based on the needs of the Marine Corps. This ensures the skills of the individual Marines selected for promotion are consistent with the vacancies in the force. Marines are considered for promotion to Staff Sergeant and above based on the primary MOS held the day the selection board convenes, unless assigned an intended MOS, in which case they will be considered for promotion in the intended MOS, not the primary MOS, on the convening date of the board.

Effective 1 January 96, successful completion of an appropriate level non-resident

Professional Military Education (PME) course is required for promotion. Unlike the officer requirement, attendance of the resident PME course is not a substitute for this requirement. Therefore, all Marines must complete the appropriate non-resident PME to be considered for promotion. Because the Marine Corps promotes by MOS, we ensure our promotion process will not impede having the necessary skills and experience in all MOS fields.

VARIABLE FIRST TIME IN-ZONE SELECTION OPPORTUNITY

One of the major goals of the Enlisted Planning Section (EPS) and the ECFC is to control retention in order to standardize promotion tempo across all MOS(S). The following are the Marine Corps’ time in service (TIS) promotion targets:

RANK	PROMOTION TEMPO
Sergeant	4 years
Staff Sergeant	8.5 years
Gunnery Sergeant	13 years
1stSgt/MSgt	17.5 years
SgtMaj/MGySgt	22 years

One of the primary tools promotion planners have to fine tune / standardize actual promotion tempo by MOS to the above targets is Variable First Time In-Zone Selection Opportunity.

MOSs that are promoting within one year of the average Time In Service (TIS) to promotion to that grade will receive the **standard** opportunity. (NOTE: **standard, minimum, and maximum** selection opportunity vary by rank. Staff Sergeant selection opportunities for promotion are much higher than Sergeant Major and Master Gunnery Sergeant. For a breakdown of selection opportunities by rank, see MARADMIN 556/02, paragraph 3B. Selection opportunity percentages used in the below example are for Staff Sergeants.) For example, **80% standard** opportunity to Staff Sergeant means that for 100 allocations, 125 Sergeants will be placed in-zone.

MOSs that are promoting slower than one year of the average TIS to promotion to that grade will receive the **minimum (70%)** opportunity. Applying the **minimum** selection opportunity will increase the number of Marines placed in the promotion zone for the first time to compete for a given number of promotion allocations. This will speed up the rate at which Marines in the slower promoting MOSs are considered for promotion. For example, if there are 100 allocations in a slow promoting MOS to Staff Sergeant, 143 Sergeants will be placed in-zone.

MOSs that are promoting faster than one year of the average TIS to promotion to that grade will receive the **maximum (90%)** opportunity. Applying the **maximum** selection opportunity will decrease the number of Marines placed in-zone for the first time to compete for a given number of promotion allocations. This will slow the rate at which Marines in the faster promoting MOSs are considered for promotion. Additionally, since such MOSs are characteristically under strength, we can enhance retention by reducing the percentage of non-selections relative to other MOSs. For example, in a fast promoting MOS to Staff Sergeant, the maximum opportunity for promotion to Staff Sergeant would be applied. If

there are 100 allocations to Staff Sergeant, 111 Sergeants will be placed in zone. This equates to only 11 Sergeants out of 111 not selected to Staff Sergeant in this hypothetical MOS.

SERVICE LIMITS

Service Limits are very important to the Marine Corps. They help keep our vigor and ensure that younger Marines have the same opportunities for promotion that were allocated to their senior leadership. For instance, in the rare case of a service limit waiver, the effects are far reaching: one Marine in each rank under the Marine who received a service limit waiver will not get promoted while the waived Marine is still on active duty.

Service limits ensure that Marines who have reached a certain year of service in their current grade without being selected for promotion are either separated or transferred to the FMCR. Enforcement of service limits improves promotion opportunity for Marines in junior grades.

For service limit computation purposes, Marines with broken service will count all active duty Marine Corps time as completed years of service. Marines with prior service in another military branch **will only count active duty Marine Corps service** toward completed years of service. The current service limits are as follows:

RANK	SERVICE LIMITS
Cpl	8 years
Sgt	13 years
SSgt	20 years
GySgt	22 years
1stSgt/MSgt	27 years

Gunnery Sergeants and 1st Sergeants / Master Sergeants who have twice failed selection prior to reaching the above service limits are not permitted to continue to these limits but may stay through their current EAS. Service limit exceptions include:

1. Corporals with 4 or more years of service who reenlist at the FTAP may be authorized a 4-year reenlistment if eligible for a selective reenlistment bonus (SRB).
2. Effective 1 Oct 01, Sergeants may reenlist up to their service limit of 13 years provided they are recommended by their commanding officer and meet all reenlistment standards.
3. Staff Sergeants who have twice failed selection to Gunnery Sergeant may be authorized reenlistment and/or extension to continue service up to 20 years, provided they continue to meet our high standards of performance and personal conduct.
4. Staff Sergeants and Gunnery Sergeants who have twice failed selection to Gunnery Sergeant or Master Sergeant are required to transfer to the FMCR at their EAS upon reaching 20 or more years of service.
5. First Sergeants/Master Sergeants who twice fail selection to Sergeant Major/Master Gunnery Sergeant are required to transfer to the FMCR at their EAS once they have completed at least 22 years of service.

It should be noted that for the purposes of service limits, Marines in the below zone who are considered but not selected for promotion are not regarded as having been passed for promotion. Additionally, GySgts who are considered for 1stSgt but not selected for 1stSgt are not regarded as having been passed for promotion until they are in zone for Master Sergeant.

If you have any questions regarding any aspect of Enlisted Career Force Controls, please contact Major David Ross at rossdl@manpower.usmc.mil or by phone at DSN 278.9362.

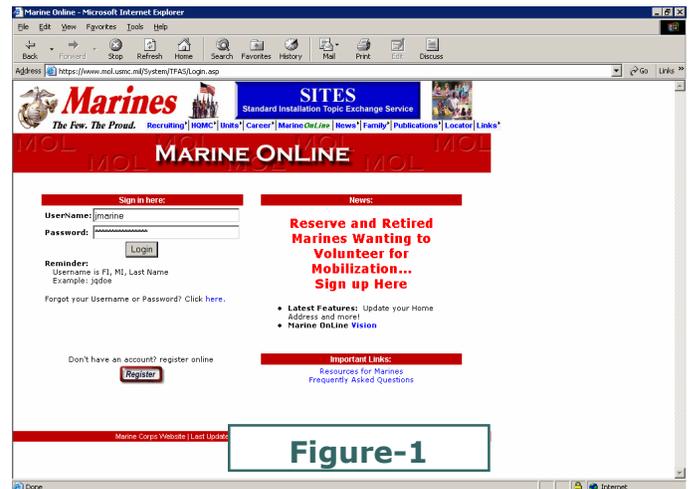
Major David L. Ross

Manpower Plans & Policy, MPP-20

WEB BASED ORDERS MADE EASY

Tired of guessing when your orders have posted? Would you like the ability to check on the status of your Permanent Change of Station (PCS) or Permanent Change of Assignment (PCA) yourself? Would you like to read a set of orders with full text, vice a message with acronyms that seem to be a secret administrative language? Web-Based Orders (a.k.a. Web Orders) is every Marine's answer. Web Orders provide the Marine Corps with the ability to expedite the PCS/PCA orders process through a secure means with an enhanced tracking system.

The easiest way to explain this new system is to follow a Marine through the assignment process. Corporal Joe Marine is assigned to 8th Engineer Battalion. Cpl Marine follows his platoon sergeant's instructions to login to Marine OnLine (MOL) and update his information on the monitor contact section (see figure 1).



After logging into MOL, Cpl Marine updates his information on the Marine Contact (see Figure 2). Because Cpl Marine entered his information correctly, he is able to receive an automatically generated e-mail notifying him of Web Orders.

GySgt Hardcharger, Cpl Marine's monitor

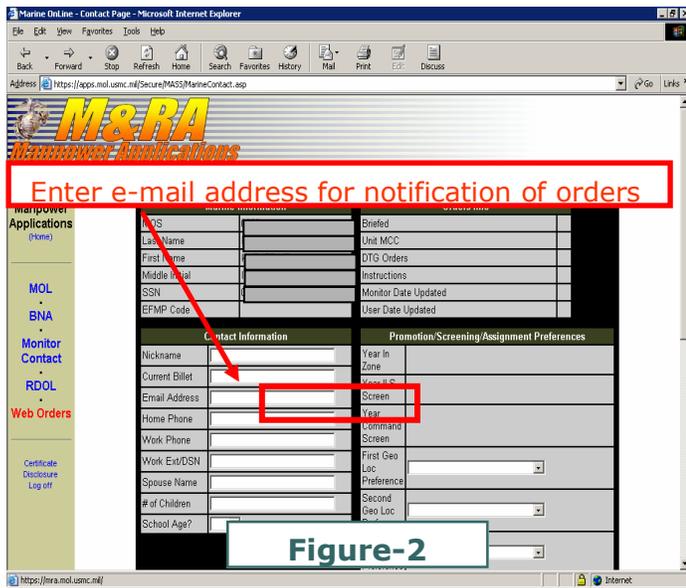


Figure-2

in Manpower Management Enlisted Assignments, checks the Monitor Assignment Support System (MASS) and sees that Cpl Marine has been on station 2 years and 4 months. Further, Cpl Marine indicated during his interview that he is interested in going overseas. GySgt Hardcharger then begins the process of assigning Cpl Marine a set of orders (see Figure 3).

After GySgt Hardcharger fills in the necessary information to create an assignment and appends the appropriate paragraph text for

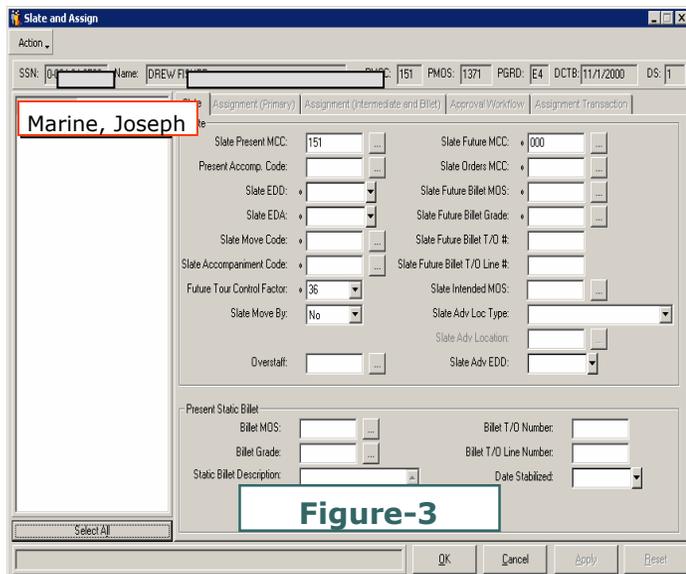


Figure-3

the orders, GySgt Hardcharger will see a screen as follows (see Figure 4):

GySgt Hardcharger can now draft orders with as much detail as required. Under the previous system Automated Order Writing Process (AOWP) or Naval Messages, monitors were limited to the amount of characters they

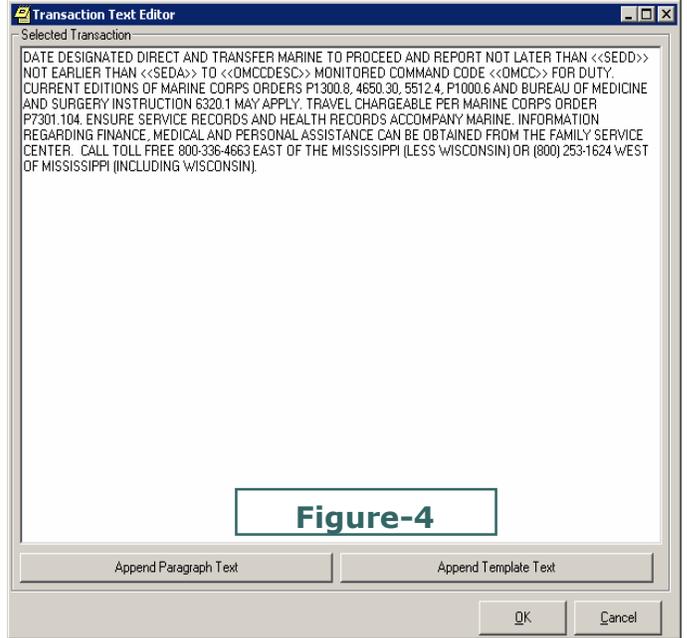


Figure-4

could put in a single message. Now a single set of orders can be written in plain language for all Marines to read and comprehend with as much detailed as required for the assignment. Further, as GySgt Hardcharger sends orders out Cpl Marine will receive e-mail notifying him. (This function will be operational in Spring 2003.) The actual Web Order will look like the following:

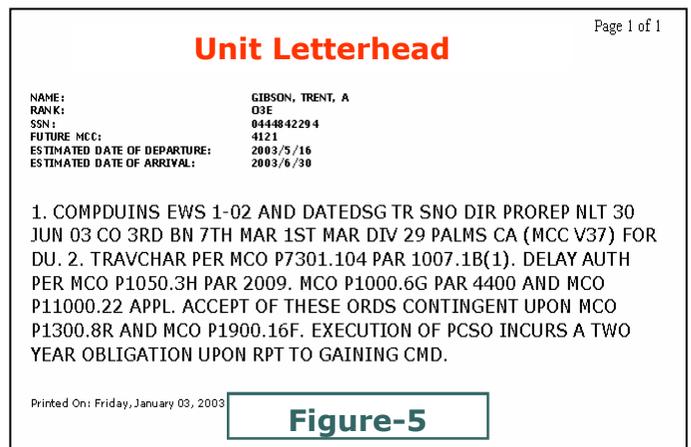


Figure-5

Things to remember about Web Orders...

1. Web Orders are for PCS/PCA orders.
2. Web Orders still need to be endorsed by



MMEA-64

Enlisted Career Counseling Unit (MMEA-64)

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WE ARE ON THE
WEB,
GO TO...

WWW.USMC.MIL

THEN TO THE
CAREER LINK

THEN TO

ENLISTED CAREER
COUNSELING

We have still not decided all the topics for the next newsletter. We would like to hear from you regarding what you may wish to know more about. Feel free to send us your suggestions by email.

your local Consolidated Administration and your unit.

3. Help your monitor out by filling out the M&RA contact sheet on MOL (see Figure 2).

4. Finally, we all send and done.

Capt Katherine I Polevitzky
MMEA-5, HQMC

CAREER RETENTION CORNER

As the first quarter of FY03 quickly comes to a close, the Subsequent Term Alignment Plan (STAP) continues to surge ahead. Career Marine retention is succeeding even faster than last year, with 1,876 Marines reenlisted at this article's time of print. This is over 30% of the FY 2003 goal of 6,172 reenlistments.

The STAP retention program began in October 2001, designed to proactively target and reenlist career Marines in specific MOS's, in order to meet retention guidelines and to assist in managing the FTAP goal. The program targets career Sergeants, Staff Sergeants, and Gunnery Sergeants, particularly those who have between 8-12 years of service. STAP is similar to the FTAP program in that each MOS receives a certain target goal of reenlistments to achieve during the fiscal year, and these are further missioned to the Major Subordinate Commands.

The incentives for Career Marines to reenlist continue to be a Selective Reenlistment Bonus (SRB) payment in eligible MOSs, along with negotiation with the monitors for geographic preference when

available.

As a reminder, there is no cut-off for Career Marine reenlistments in any particular MOS. Unlike the First Term Alignment Plan (FTAP), Career Marines do not need boatspaces to reenlist. This means Marines may still reenlist in their PMOS if that MOS has already reached its target goal for the year. The SRB program is currently scheduled to shut off on 31 January 2003. Career Marines are encouraged to reenlist as soon as possible, particularly if their MOS rates a bonus.

Capt Megan A Quinn
STAP Officer, MMEA-6



**The SRB program is currently
scheduled to shut off 030131**