



  
**Commanding General**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Marine Aircraft Wing**  
*Suicide Prevention Policy*  
22 June 2012

Marines and Sailors are our most precious resource. What affects them affects our ability to accomplish our assigned missions and to maintain our readiness to respond when the Nation calls. We owe it to each member of 1st Marine Aircraft Wing to ensure that he or she has the tools, support, and training needed to succeed and thrive in this challenging environment. Across the Corps, many Marines and Sailors find themselves struggling with life issues, until they become convinced that no viable solution exists other than to take their own life. Leaders at every level must remain vigilant and be ready to intervene on their behalf with the help made available through a variety of resources--such as chaplain, medical and MCCA programs and services.

We will focus our efforts and training in three primary ways: compliance with established Suicide Prevention Program requirements; empowerment of all Marines and Sailors, especially peers and NCOs, to intervene with those who are struggling and get them the help they need; and reinforcement throughout the Wing that it is OK to seek help.

Force Preservation Councils are an essential part of each Unit's Suicide Prevention Program. While similar to Human Factors Councils conducted in flying squadrons to assess aircrew human factors, these councils require critical review of all command personnel and leaders must ensure that the increased population under consideration does not cause the individual assessments to be diluted. Force Preservation Councils are only as effective as the level of preparation and effort put into them.

Commanders must have access to their Marines' and Sailors' pertinent medical information to assess their readiness for mission tasking and to ensure they are receiving the care required to address emerging or ongoing issues. MARADMIN 240/11 states, "Decisive and engaged leadership with leaders truly knowing their Marines is critical. There is absolutely no information that a battalion or squadron commander should not have about his/her Marines."

Since my arrival to 1st MAW I have observed a number of our Marines and Sailors intervening to get a peer or subordinate much needed help. These Marines and Sailors really are our "first line of defense:" roommates, peers, NCOICs, Duty NCOs. I applaud them, as it takes moral courage to take action in what is usually an ambiguous situation. I see each of these episodes as a "save," and each reinforces the sense of family within a unit. I challenge leaders at all levels to recognize those who intervene, and to ensure that those who receive help remain an integral part of their unit and return to full duty status as soon as they are able to do so.

1st MAW has been very successful of late in prevention of suicide, but we must never lose our vigilance. The loss of even one Marine or Sailor is both tragic and unacceptable. Each of us must be ready to intervene and assist when the time comes.

Semper Fidelis



C. S. OWENS

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