



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
I MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE HEADQUARTERS GROUP
I MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE
BOX 555325
CAMP PENDLETON, CA 92055-5325

GruO 1650.1A
S-1
1 Apr 14

GROUP ORDER 1650.1A

From: Commanding Officer, I Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group
To: Distribution List

Subj: PERSONAL AWARDS SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Ref: (a) SECNAVINST 1650.1H
(b) MCO 1650.19J
(c) I MEF 1650.1F
(d) COMUSMARCENT MSG 271900x APR 05

Encl: (1) I MEF CE/I MHG Awards Flow
(2) Award Citation Opening and Closing Sentences
(3) Award Recommendation Checklists
(4) Awarding Authority Matrix

1. Situation. Recognizing exceptional performance is one of the most effective means of enhancing morale. Considering the mission of I Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarter Group (I MHG), there are many instances when individuals can be recognized for service of achievement, which clearly demonstrates superior performance. Accordingly, references (a-d) and this order provide standards, eligibility criteria, and guidance to be followed when preparing personal award recommendations.

2. Mission. Publish policy and procedures enabling timely and accurate submission of personal awards for personnel assigned to I MHG and the I Marine Expeditionary Force Command Element (I MEF CE).

3. Execution

a. Commander's Intent. To ensure that a uniform awards policy exists to guide commanders in the preparation and submission of awards so that deserving individuals are appropriately recognized in a timely manner. In accordance with the Commandant's guidance, awards will be reserved for those Marines and Sailors who clearly exceed routine performance standards and whose actions merit special recognition. Character and integrity of personal awards will be preserved.

b. Concept of Operations. The goal of the I MHG awards program is to recognize exemplary performance. Awards are only significant if they are reserved for those Marines and Sailor whose outstanding service surpasses their peers' routine performance. To award average performances with a personal decoration diminishes the military awards programs and serves as a disservice to truly deserving individuals. To serve its intended purpose, an award must be well written and timely.

(1) Timelines. Prepare and submit awards per enclosures (1 through 4) prior to the recipient's departure, change of command, or retirement ceremony. Awards submitted late will not be expedited as a routine matter.

Requests for expedited processing must be accompanied by a letter or email signed by the Major Subordinate Elements' (MSE Commanding Officer or Applicable Assistant Chiefs of Staff (AC/S)), explaining the circumstances.

(a) Legions of Merit (LM) and awards of greater precedence. Submit each recommendation via the appropriate Improved Awards Processing System (iAPS) Unit Awards Administrator at least 90 days prior to the anticipated presentation date.

(b) Meritorious Service Medal (MM). Submit each recommendation via the appropriate iAPS Unit Awards Administrator at least 60 days prior to the anticipated presentation date.

(c) Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (NC) and Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (NA). Submit these recommendations via the appropriate iAPS Unit Awards Administrator at least 30 days prior to the anticipated presentation date.

c. Awarding authority. Per the references, this authority is delegated for certain awards, as illustrated in enclosure (1).

(1) For personal decorations, the Commanding Officer, I MHG is authorized to award letters of appreciation, certificates of commendation, NA's, and NC's. MSE Commanding Officers are authorized to award letters of appreciation, certificates of commendation and NA's. All MM's and above will be approved by at least the Commanding General, I MEF.

(2) Combat Awards. COMUSMARCENT is the awarding authority for the Bronze Star and all lower combat awards, recognizing actions made during combat tours. Those combat awards described in the latter sentence include:

(a) Bronze Star (BS)

(b) Bronze Star with combat distinguishing device (BV).

(c) Purple Heart (PH). Personnel Casualty Reports (PCR) will be used to determine eligibility for the PH and will be processed per reference (d). If a PCR was no submitted a minimum of two eyewitness statements are required.

(d) Air Medal (AH).

(e) Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with Combat "V"
(CV).

(f) Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with Combat "V" (NV).

(g) Combat Action Ribbon (CR). Recommendations will be processed as outlined in references (a) and (d).

b. Meritorious Service Recognition. Meritorious service denotes performance clearly above what is normally required or expected, considering the individual's grade or rate, training and experience, and sustained so as to demonstrate a high state of performance of duty for the purpose of recognized an individual with an award.

(1) Detachment. Detachment involves a permanent change of station,

permanent change of area, separation, or retirement. Internal I MHG reassignment or change of duty does not in itself constitute detachment for awards purpose. At the completion of a standard tour of duty (usually 3 years) an individual might be recognized for sustained, superior performance through a personal award.

(2) Impact (Specific Achievement) Awards. Impact awards recognize superlative achievement or specific actions covering a brief period, not to exceed 6 months. The actions mentioned in an impact award cannot be included in subsequent award. Commanders are reminded that impact awards could detract from presenting a deserving individual with a more prestigious award following a very successful tour within I MEF.

(3) Per paragraph 211.3.d of reference (a), mid-tour awards are inappropriate. Commanders are encouraged to include noteworthy actions in a detachment award or utilize a Letter of Continuity.

c. Letter of Continuity. When a reporting senior is detaching and believes the service of a subordinate merits recognition, a Letter of Continuity recognizing the individual's accomplishments for the observed period should be completed and retained within the command, pending detachment of the individual. When the individual detaches prior to the reporting senior, and the individual has not completed a standard tour of duty, then submit the Letter of Continuity to the new command and reporting senior. At the conclusion of the individual's standard tour, if at that time the current reporting senior feels the latter portion of the individual's tour merits recognition, combine the recommendation with the earlier one; if not, the recommendation of the predecessor shall be forwarded for consideration on its own merits.

d. Certificate of Commendation (CF). Recommendations for a I MHG Commanding Officer's CF will be submitted to the I MHG S-1 in naval letter format, along with a proposed citation as an enclosure. The proposed citation should be no more than 10.5 lines in length (Courier New, 10-point font).

e. General Instructions

(1) Personal awards must be prepared in accordance with this Order and the references. Recommendations for Unit awards will be prepared per references (a) and (b).

(2) Incomplete or insufficiently supported awards will be returned for correction.

(3) Awards will not be normally expedited when submitted late unless approved by the Commanding Officer.

(4) Award submissions cannot include periods of time previously recognized by an impact award (including certificates of commendation and meritorious masts). Only include periods of time and achievements not previously recognized in another award. Provide a copy of any impact awards electronically, as an attachment to the recommendation in iAPS under "ATTACHMENTS."

(5) Recommendations for personal awards may be initiated by any

commissioned officer senior to the individual being recommended; then routed via the appropriate chain of command for endorsement.

(6) Normally, a Marine should receive no more than one award per three year tour within I MHG. Unit leaders are encouraged to submit letters of continuity on Marines reassigned within I MHG.

(7) Recommendations for the award of a military decoration or medal for a specific achievement, sufficiently distinct from normally assigned duties and of sufficient merit to warrant recognition, may be submitted for consideration prior to the individual's end of tour.

(8) Award recommendation for I MHG personnel attached to other organizations (e.g. IA/ JMD deployed personnel), for meritorious or heroic achievement while attached, will be submitted to the commander of that organization and its chain of command.

(9) The originator of an award recommendation will ensure that the recommendation is well written, fully justified, and consistent with the criteria established in references (a), and (b), and this Order. Additionally, proposed citations will be consistent with the information contained in the Summary of Action (SOA), with no new achievements introduced.

(10) Construct sentences that describe meritorious or heroic performance, but avoid words not easily understood or appreciated by persons unfamiliar with the military and, in particularly, Marine aviation. Do not let acronyms stand alone in a citation- e.g., a KC-130 should be referred to as a KC-130 Hercules aircraft. AN/TPS-59 should be AN/TPS-59 long range radar; an M-192 should be M-192 missile launcher. The sentence structure of the proposed citation will be semi-formal.

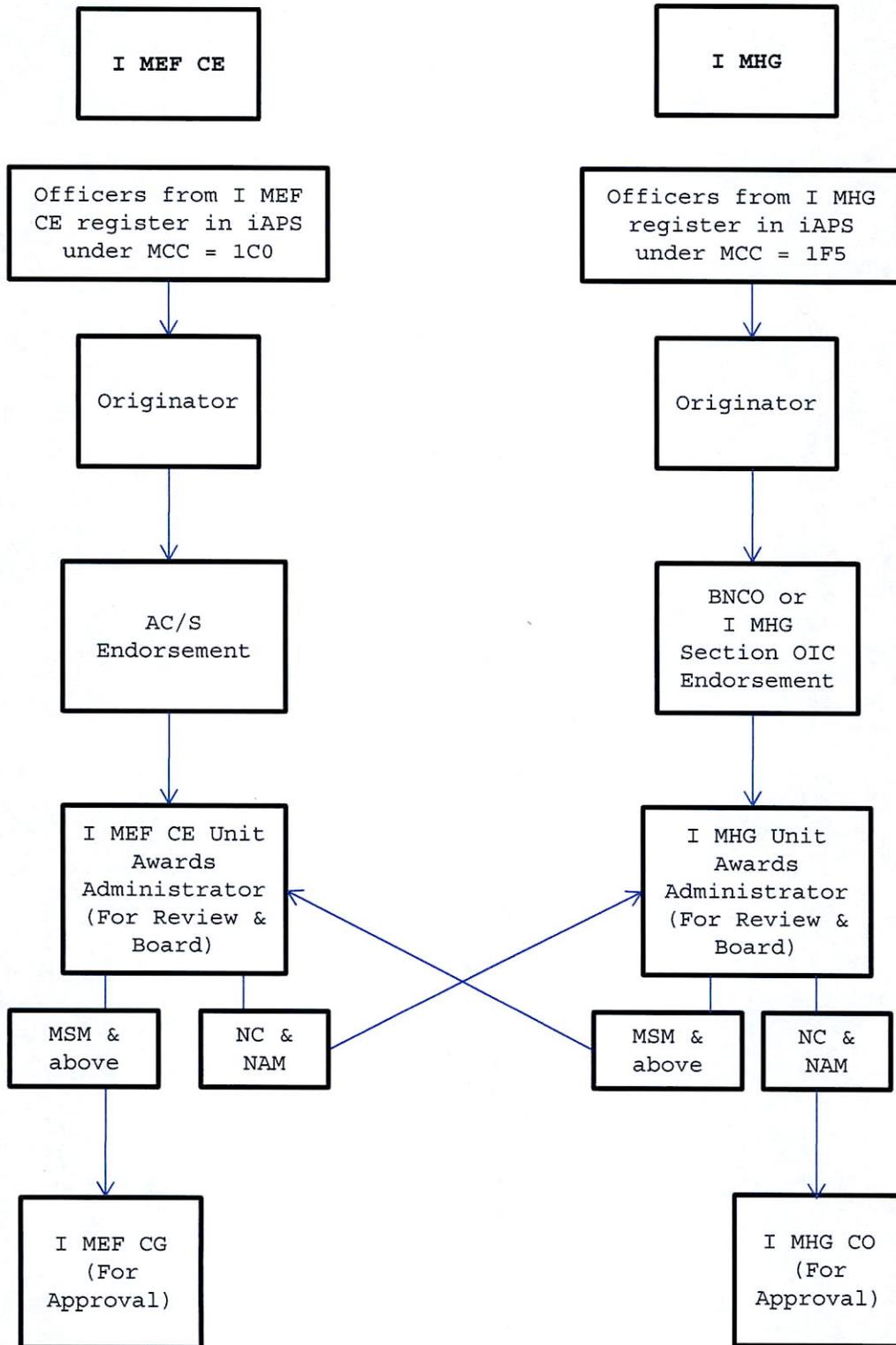
(11) The Citation will be expressed in the third person. Meritorious Service Medals and higher should be 24 lines in length.

(12) For non-combatant personal awards, brevity of the SOA is encouraged. When preparing the SOA, a one to two page outline or bullet format for NA's will be used. NA's will be as brief as possible and limited to one page. NC's should be limited to two pages. For more senior awards - i.e., MM's and above - complete sentences in paragraphs will be used and the SOA should be limited to three pages. Despite the style used, emphasis will be placed on specifically stating or describing the duty performance and specific accomplishments that warrant recognition. The SOA should support the award recommendation by stating what the member did, how well the member did it, and what effect the member's action had on mission accomplishment. Avoid vague, superlatives phrases and generalities. In all cases, an opening paragraph should contain the rank and full name of the person recommended, the unit assigned, and the period covered.

(13) Award recommendations for meritorious or heroic achievement for more than one individual stemming from the same act will be forwarded separately, at the same time for consideration.

(14) The SOA for retirement awards will provide the individual's combat service history with location and dates, the total number of year's active service, and where the award is to be presented if approved. The period of service for separation or retirement awards will only include

I MEF CE / I MHG AWARDS FLOW



service while assigned to I MHG and will not include instances of meritorious performances encompassing the individual's entire period of active service.

(15) Per the grade restrictions in reference (a), NC's will only be awarded to personnel in the grade of Major/Lieutenant Commander and below.

f. Posthumous Awards

(1) Recommendations for posthumous awards will be processed per enclosure (2) of this Order.

(2) Commanding officers authorized to award the NA can award this medal posthumously.

g. Proper documentation. Ensure documentation of the award is included in fitness reports, per reference (c).

h. I MHG Awards Board. I MHG shall employ at least two different awards boards. These boards will provide recommendations to the I MHG Commanding Officer (CO) concerning personal awards, for which I MHG CO retains awarding authority or endorsement privilege. The members of these boards shall perform their duties utilizing iAPS board functions and will record their recommendations.

4. Administration and Logistics

a. All officers assigned to I MHG will register in iAPS under MCC 1F5.

b. All officers assigned to I MEF will register in iAPS under MCC 1C0.

c. Forward award recommendations to the I MHG "Unit Awards Administrator" using iAPS. Confirm receipt by phone or email.

d. Submit inquiries to this Order to the I MHG S-1.


J. H. HERRERA

Distribution: A

AWARD CITATION OPENING AND CLOSING SENTENCES

AWARD	OPENING SENTENCE	CLOSING SENTENCE
CERTIFICATE OF COMMENDATION (CF)	OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN THE PERFORMANCE OF (HIS/HER) DUTIES AS (BILLET, UNIT), I MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE HEADQUARTERS GROUP, FROM (MONTH YEAR) TO (MONTH YEAR).	(RANK NAME)'S OUTSTANDING MOTIVATION AND DEDICATION TO DUTY REFLECTED CREDIT UPON (HIM, HER) AND WERE IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MARINE CORPS (FOR USMC)/UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICE(FOR THE NAVY).
NAVY AND MARINE CORPS ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL (NA/NV)	PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT (FOR ALL NAs, EXCEPT NVs)/HEROIC ACHIEVEMENT (ALL NVs) IN THE SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE OF (HIS/HER) DUTIES WHILE SERVING AS (BILLET, UNIT), I MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE HEADQUARTERS GROUP, FROM (MONTH YEAR) TO (MONTH YEAR).	(RANK NAME)'S INITIATIVE, PERSEVERANCE, AND TOTAL DEDICATION TO DUTY REFLECTED CREDIT UPON (HIM, HER) AND WERE IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MARINE CORPS AND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICE.
NAVY AND MARINE CORPS COMMENDATION MEDAL (NC/CV)	MERITORIOUS SERVICE (RETIREMENT/EOT)/MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT (ALL OTHER NCs, EXCEPT CVs)/HEROIC ACHIEVEMENT (ALL CVs) WHILE SERVING AS (BILLET, UNIT), I MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE HEADQUARTERS GROUP, FROM (MONTH YEAR) TO (MONTH YEAR).	(RANK NAME)'S NOTEWORTHY ACCOMPLISHMENTS, PERSEVERANCE, AND DEVOTION TO DUTY REFLECTED CREDIT UPON (HIM, HER) AND WERE IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MARINE CORPS AND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICE.
MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL (MM)	For outstanding meritorious achievement(all MMs, except retirement)/meritorious service(for retirement) service while serving as (Billet, Unit), I Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group, from (month year) to (month year)	The exceptional professional ability, steadfast initiative, and selfless dedication to duty exhibited by (rank name) reflected great credit upon (him, her) and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.
BRONZE STAR (BS/BV)	For heroic achievement (impact/transfer BVs)/ meritorious achievement (impact/transfer BSs)/meritorious service(retirement BSs)/ heroic service(retirement BVs) in connection with combat operations against the enemy OR in connection with operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force while serving as (Billet, Unit), I Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group, from (day month year) to (day month year).	BS - (Rank Name)'s total effectiveness, forceful leadership, and loyal devotion to duty reflected great credit upon (him/her) and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service. BV-By (his/her) zealous initiative, courageous actions, and exceptional dedication to duty, (Rank Name) reflected great credit upon (him/her) and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

AWARD RECOMMENDATION CHECKLISTS1. NAVY & MARINE CORPS ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL (NA)a. INFORMATION PAGE

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION MUST BE PRESENT:

- AWARDING AUTHORITY IS "CO, I MHG"
- EAS IS PRESENT FOR ENLISTED/ OFFICERS IS "INDEFINITE"
- AWARD TYPE IS CHECKED
 - o RETIREMENT:
 - YRS OF SERVICE PRESENT
 - ADDRESS WILL BE THEIR HOME OF RECORD
 - o TRANSFER:
 - ADDRESS WILL BE THEIR NEXT DUTY STATION
 - o TERMINAL LEAVE:
 - ADDRESS WILL BE THEIR HOME OF RECORD
 - o IMPACT AWARD
 - NO ADDRESS NEEDED
- NUMBER OF NAs THIS WOULD MAKE IF APPROVED, IS VERIFIED.
- ACTION DATES MATCH IN ALL THREE SECTIONS OF AWARD (INFO PAGE/CITATION/SOA)
- PREVIOUS AWARDS ARE LISTED AND VERIFIED.
- IF ANY AWARDS OVERLAP WITH CURRENT ACTION DATES, HAVE THEY BEEN UPLOADED IN THE "ATTACHMENT" TAB?
- ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE FROM ORIGINATOR IS OF AN EQUAL RANK AND/OR SENIOR BILLET.

b. SUMMARY OF ACTION (SOA):

- ACRONYMS ARE PROPERLY IDENTIFIED
- SPECIFIC EXAMPLES ARE GIVEN, AVOIDS GENERALIZATIONS
- BULLETS OK
- 1-1 ½ PAGES

c. CITATION:

- ALL CAPS
- 1250 CHARACTERS IN IAPS
- NO ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS
- DOES IT REFLECT SUMMARY OF ACTION? / DOES IT MENTION ACCOMPLISHMENTS?
- OPENING SENTENCE READS:
 - o "PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT IN THE SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE OF (HIS/HER) DUTIES WHILE SERVING AS (BILLET, UNIT), I MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE, FROM (MONTH/YEAR) TO (MONTH/YEAR)."
- CLOSING SENTENCE READS:
 - o "(RANK'S LAST NAME)'S INITIATIVE, PERSEVERANCE, AND TOTAL DEDICATION TO DUTY REFLECTED CREDIT UPON (HIM/HER) AND WERE IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MARINE CORPS AND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICE."

AWARD RECOMMENDATION CHECKLISTS

2. NAVY & MARINE CORPS COMMENDATION MEDAL (NC)

a. INFORMATION PAGE

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION MUST BE PRESENT:

- AWARDING AUTHORITY IS "CO, I MHG"
- EAS IS PRESENT FOR ENLISTED/ OFFICERS IS "INDEFINITE"
- AWARD TYPE IS CHECKED
 - o RETIREMENT:
 - YRS OF SERVICE PRESENT
 - ADDRESS WILL BE THEIR HOME OF RECORD
 - o TRANSFER:
 - ADDRESS WILL BE THEIR NEXT DUTY STATION
 - o TERMINAL LEAVE:
 - ADDRESS WILL BE THEIR HOME OF RECORD
 - o IMPACT AWARD
 - NO ADDRESS NEEDED
- NUMBER OF NCs THIS WOULD MAKE IF APPROVED, IS VERIFIED.
- ACTION DATES MATCH IN ALL THREE SECTIONS OF AWARD (INFO PAGE/CITATION/SOA)
- PREVIOUS AWARDS ARE LISTED AND VERIFIED.
- IF ANY AWARDS OVERLAP WITH CURRENT ACTION DATES, HAVE THEY BEEN UPLOADED IN THE "ATTACHMENT" TAB?
- ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE FROM ORIGINATOR IS OF AN EQUAL RANK AND/OR SENIOR BILLET.

b. SUMMARY OF ACTION (SOA):

- ACRONYMS ARE PROPERLY IDENTIFIED
- SPECIFIC EXAMPLES ARE GIVEN, AVOIDS GENERALIZATIONS
- NO BULLETS
- 2-2 1/2 PAGES

c. CITATION:

- ALL CAPS
- 1250 CHARACTERS IN IAPS
- NO ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS
- DOES IT REFLECT SUMMARY OF ACTION? / DOES IT MENTION ACCOMPLISHMENTS?
- OPENING SENTENCE READS:
 - o "(MERITORIOUS SERVICE, MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT, HEROIC SERVICE, OR HEROIC ACHIEVEMENT) WHILE SERVING AS (BILLET, UNIT), I MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE, FROM (MONTH/YEAR) TO (MONTH/ YEAR)."
- CLOSING SENTENCE READS:
 - o "(RANK NAME)'S NOTEWORTHY ACCOMPLISHMENTS, PERSEVERANCE, AND DEVOTION TO DUTY REFLECTED CREDIT UPON (HIM/HER) AND WERE IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MARINE CORPS AND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICE.

AWARD RECOMMENDATION CHECKLISTS3. MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL (MSM)a. INFORMATION PAGE:

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION MUST BE PRESENT:

- AWARDING AUTHORITY IS "CG, I MEF"
- EAS IS PRESENT FOR ENLISTED/ OFFICERS IS "INDEFINITE"
- AWARD TYPE IS CHECKED
 - o RETIREMENT:
 - YRS OF SERVICE PRESENT
 - ADDRESS WILL BE THEIR HOME OF RECORD
 - o TRANSFER:
 - ADDRESS WILL BE THEIR NEXT DUTY STATION
 - o TERMINAL LEAVE:
 - ADDRESS WILL BE THEIR HOME OF RECORD
 - o IMPACT AWARD
 - NO ADDRESS NEEDED
- NUMBER OF MSMs THIS WOULD MAKE IF APPROVED, IS VERIFIED.
- ACTION DATES MATCH IN ALL THREE SECTIONS OF AWARD (INFO PAGE/CITATION/SOA)
- PREVIOUS AWARDS ARE LISTED AND VERIFIED
- IF ANY AWARDS OVERLAP WITH CURRENT ACTION DATES, HAVE THEY BEEN UPLOADED IN THE "ATTACHMENT" TAB?
- ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE FROM ORIGINATOR IS OF AN EQUAL RANK AND/OR SENIOR BILLET.

b. SUMMARY OF ACTION (SOA):

- ACRONYMS ARE PROPERLY IDENTIFIED
- SPECIFIC EXAMPLES ARE GIVEN, AVOIDS GENERALIZATIONS
- NO BULLETS

c. CITATION:

- NATURAL CAPS (upper and lower case)
- 1800 CHARACTERS IN IAPS
- NO ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS
- DOES IT REFLECT SUMMARY OF ACTION? / DOES IT MENTION ACCOMPLISHMENTS?
- OPENING SENTENCE READS:
 - o "For outstanding meritorious service while serving as (Billet/Unit), I Marine Expeditionary Force, from (Month/Year) to (Month/Year)."
- CLOSING SENTENCE READS:
 - o "The exceptional professional ability, steadfast initiative, and selfless dedication to duty exhibited by (Rank Name) reflected great credit upon (him/her) and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service."
- IF A **RETIREMENT** AWARD, THE RETIREMENT SENTENCE SHOULD BE INCLUDED AS THE SECOND-TO-LAST SENTENCE AND SHOULD READ:
 - o "(His/Her) superior performance of duty during this tour is the hallmark of a career devoted to accomplishing broad and diverse assignments, highlighting the culmination of (#) years of honorable and dedicated Marine Corps Service."

AWARDING AUTHORITY MATRIX

AWARD	AWARDING AUTHORITY
MEDAL OF HONOR (MH) NAVY CROSS (NX) SILVER STAR (SS)	SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
LEGION OF MERIT (LM) DISTINUISHED FLYING CROSS (DX/DV) NAVY AND MARINE CORPS MEDAL (NM)	COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS
BRONZE STAR (BS/BV) AIR MEDAL WITH COMBAT "V" (AH) PURPLE HEART NAVY AND MARINE CORPS COMMENDATION MEDAL W/ COMBAT "V" NAVY AND MARINE CORPS ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL W/ COMBAT "V" (NV) COMBAT ACTION RIBBON	COMMANDER, U.S. MARINE CORPS FORCES, CENTRAL COMMAND
MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL (MM) AIR MEDAL (AF/AS)	COMMANDING GENERAL, I MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE
NAVY AND MARINE CORPS COMMENDATION MEDAL (NC)	COMMANDING OFFICER, I MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE HEADQUARTERS GROUP
NAVY AND MARINE CORPS ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL (NA)	BATTALION COMMANDERS