SPMAGTF–CR–CC Commanding Officer's Statement on Safety

As Marines and Sailors assigned to a forward deployed MAGTF, danger is our constant companion. The missions we conduct and the training we execute to prepare for those missions are inherently dangerous activities. With these realities in mind, we must do all within our power, at every level, to minimize the threats to our people's safety when and where we are able.

As aggressive as I require you to be while executing our missions, I want you to be equally aggressive in making our mission preparations as safe as they can be made, without deviating from standards. Safety is not paramount, but it must be one of the foremost considerations when leaders are planning a unit's activities. Every risk must be examined to determine how it can be minimized, while still completing the mission at hand. We do not prioritize safety over all else; rather, we strive to accomplish every mission set before us while aggressively mitigating all associated hazards whether they be in the air, on post, in our maintenance areas, during training, everywhere - 24/7. This is not easy, but it is required.

Over the last several decades, the Marine Corps has dramatically improved the tools and programs supporting safety. MCO 5100.29B and its supporting orders and policies issue direction, guidance, and frameworks that have been thoroughly tested over time, providing us resources to use when evaluating our safety environment and practices. These tools and programs work, but must be thoroughly understood and implemented to be effective. Within the SPMAGTF, we will review, understand, execute, monitor, and improve upon the requirements of safety-related orders and directives. It is important to note that improvement will come from the active participation of our Marines and Sailors, who must be encouraged to identify not only unsafe conditions, but also new ways to mitigate hazards. Adherence to these proven safety programs and a command climate that facilitates the identification and mitigation of risk are the keys to our success.

As an additional measure, we will incorporate Operational Risk Management (ORM) into all appropriate activities. We must continually identify and assess hazards, make effective risk decisions, implement controls and supervise – in everything that we do. ORM must become a mindset, not a routine to be gotten through. In the SPMAGTF we will treat each mission and event as an opportunity to better mitigate the hazards we face. Senior leaders must monitor and supervise the application of ORM in their units.

The Marines and Sailors of this SPMAGTF are our most precious asset. As we prepare for and conduct our mission here in the Central Command area of responsibility, we must continuously protect our people through the proper implementation of our safety programs. Nothing less is acceptable.

K. R. Kassner
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Commanding Officer