



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
I MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE  
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IN REPLY REFER TO:  
3501  
FECC  
JUN 30 2016

POLICY LETTER 5-16

From: Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force  
To: Distribution List

Subj: I MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE HIGH ALTITUDE HIGH OPENING PARACHUTE  
TRAINING POLICY

Ref: (a) NAVMC 3500.55B  
(b) MCO 3120.9C  
(c) MCWP 2-25  
(d) ATP 3-18.11  
(e) I MEFO 3120.9 Ch 3

Encl: (1) MCWP 2-25 Table H-7 Appendix H page 8  
(2) AFI 11-409 Table 5.1 Pre-breathing Requirements for Missions at or  
above FL200

1. Purpose. Establish 1st Reconnaissance Battalion (1st RECON BN) Advanced Tactical Infiltration Course (ATIC) training requests as Priority 1 (Pri 1) in the Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) Fragmentary (FRAG) Process.

2. Information. Per references (a) and (c), High Altitude High Opening (HAHO) Specialized Insertion and Extraction (SPIE) is a Mission Essential Task (MET). Every Marine Reconnaissance platoon is required to have one trained HAHO/SPIE team. The contract ATIC course trains Marines to the Special Operations Command (SOCOM) ATIC standard in order to meet Marine Corps METs. Specifically, 1st RECON BN must be able to conduct Marine Corps Tasks 1.1.2 (Provide Task Organized Forces), 2.7 (Conduct Ground Reconnaissance and Surveillance), and 1.9 (Conduct Specialized Insertion and Extraction). Due to the inability to attain school allocations via the SOCOM operated ATIC, Marine Corps Reconnaissance Battalions are required to outsource the ATIC equivalent via Department of Defense ATIC qualified instructors. Contract aviation support has historically been the primary means of accomplishing ATIC training at altitudes below 18,000 feet mean sea level (MSL). Military aviation support is requested to meet all Category III training objectives and altitudes greater than 17,999 feet Mean Sea Level (MSL) and facilitate capabilities requirements expected of reconnaissance teams. Enclosure (1) and (2) pertains.

3. Scope. This Policy applies to all Global Force Management/Pre-deployment Training Program (GFM/PTP) ATIC training for 1st RECON BN, 1st Marine Division and is supported by 3d Marine Aircraft Wing through the I MEF FRAG process.

a. Definition. Assign ATIC training as a Pri 1 outside of the six-month deployment window, with 1st RECON BN requests competing with other GFM/PTP

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requirements.

b. Policy. I MEF will assign 1st RECON BN ATIC as Pri 1 for all GFM/PTP ATIC training in order to provide advanced SPIE capabilities. KC-130 and MV-22 should support two jumps between 17,999 and 24,999 MSL exit altitudes. The remaining Pri 1 FRAGs in support of 1st RECON should be supported by any mixture of Marine assault support aircraft.

c. Point of contact is the I MEF G-3 Air Cell, Fires and Effects Coordination Center for further guidance.

4. Certification. This Policy letter is applicable to the I MEF Total Force.

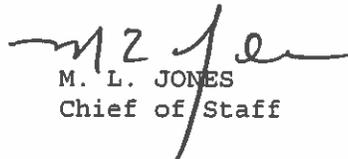
  
M. L. JONES  
Chief of Staff

Table H-7. Category III Parachutist Certification Requirements.

Jump Number	Jump Type (HAHO/HALO)	Exit Altitude Minimum/Maximum feet AGL	Notes
1	A/NT	7,500/12,999	
2	A/NT*	7,500/12,999	
3	A/NT/CE	7,500/12,999	
4	A/NT/CE*	7,500/12,999	
5	A/NT/CE/O	7,500/12,999	
6	A/NT/CE	7,500/12,999	
7	A/NT/CE/O*	9,500/17,999	Required pre-breathe
8	A/NT/CE	7,500/12,999	
9	A/NT/CE/O	7,500/12,999	
10	A/NT/CE/O*	17,999/24,999	Required pre-breathe
11	A/NT/N	7,500/12,999	
12	A/NT/N*	7,500/12,999	
13	A/NT/CE/N	7,500/12,999	
14	A/NT/CE/N*	7,500/12,999	
15	A/NT/CE/N/O	7,500/12,999	
16	A/NT/CE/N	7,500/12,999	
17	A/NT/CE/N/O*	9,500/17,999	Required pre-breathe
18	A/NT/CE/N	7,500/12,999	
19	A/NT/CE/N/O	7,500/12,999	
20	A/NT/CE/N/O*	17,999/24,999	Required pre-breathe Category III certified
21	A/T	5,500/12,999	Recommended progression
22	A/T/CE	5,500/12,999	Recommended progression
23	A/T/N	5,500/12,999	Recommended progression
24	A/T/CE/N	5,500/12,999	Recommended progression
25	A/NT/W	5,500/12,999	Recommended progression
26	A/NT/CE/W	5,500/12,999	Recommended progression
27	A/NT/N/W	5,500/12,999	Recommended progression
29	A/NT/CE/N/W	5,500/12,999	Recommended progression
*TORDS progression			

13,000 feet MSL, or exceeding the 30-minute envelope between 10,000 and 13,000 feet MSL, a continuous supply of supplemental oxygen will be used.

5.5.3. When the aircraft oxygen system does not provide sufficient oxygen regulators for all personnel, approved portable oxygen systems (e.g., oxygen consoles, hoses, masks, CRU-79 etc) will be inspected and installed in the aircraft. The consoles will provide enough oxygen connections for all crewmembers, parachutists or other MEP not accommodated by the normal aircraft oxygen system. (T-1)

#### 5.6. Pre-breathe Requirements for Missions at or Above FL200.

5.6.1. All personnel will pre-breathe 100 percent oxygen below 16,000 feet MSL cabin altitude on any mission scheduled for an exposure at or above FL200 for times shown in Table 5.1 (T-2)

5.6.2. The PIC, with recommendations from the PT and primary jumpmaster (if applicable), will determine the course of action for a break in pre-breathing. (T-3)

5.6.3. Pre-breathing will be conducted with a personally-fitted oxygen mask attached to an approved helmet and personal oxygen system. **Note:** Emergency oxygen equipment (e.g., MA-1, quick-don/smoke mask etc.) is not approved for pre-breathing. (T-1)

#### 5.7. Restrictions.

5.7.1. **Accumulative Total Time.** This time begins and ends when cabin altitude is above and below FL200 and will not exceed 110 minutes. Additional flying may be conducted below FL200. (T-2)

5.7.2. **Maximum Block Exposure Time.** Aircraft cabin altitude time limits are categorized into blocks of altitude and are listed in Table 5.1. Additional flying may be conducted at lower blocks of altitude.

5.7.3. If the aircraft lands between sorties, and the time on the ground equals or exceeds the time spent at or above a cabin altitude of FL200, the accumulative total or block time (if applicable) of allowable duration can be reset to the maximum.

5.7.4. No more than 3 pre-breather sorties in a 24-hour period (take-off to landing) unless otherwise restricted. (T-2)

5.7.5. At least 24 hours between exposures to or above FL300. (T-2)

5.7.6. Ascent rates will not exceed 5,000 ft/min. (T-2)

**Table 5.1. Pre-breathing Requirements and Exposure Limits (T-1).**

Altitude (Note 1)	Oxygen Requirement	Pre-breathe Time	Maximum Block Exposure Time (Note 2, 3)
10,000 ft - 12,999ft	Aircrew: Supplemental Jumpers: See para. 5.5.2.	N/A	Unlimited

13,000 ft - FL199	Supplemental	N/A	Unlimited
FL200 - FL249	100% O <sub>2</sub>	30 Min	110 Min
FL250 - FL299	100% O <sub>2</sub>	30 Min	60 Min
FL300 - FL 349	100% O <sub>2</sub>	45 Min	30 Min
FL350 or above	100% O <sub>2</sub>	75 Min	30 Min

**NOTES:**

1. Altitudes listed in MSL.
2. Aircraft must descend to a lower block (or below FL200) once the maximum block exposure time is met. EXAMPLE – Planned drops at FL399, FL299, and FL249; time begins passing through FL200 and is limited to 30 minutes at FL399, descend to FL299 for 30 minutes (60 minutes accumulative), descend to FL249 for 50 minutes (110 minutes accumulative).
3. Limits based on not exceeding 23% decompression sickness (DCS) incidence under laboratory conditions (<1% operational impact such as abort or mission alteration/descent).

**5.8. Operations above FL250 feet MSL.**

5.8.1. A waiver to AFI 11-202V3 is required from AF Flight Standards Agency for unpressurized flights when conducting airdrops FL250 feet MSL and above.

5.8.2. MA-1 portable oxygen units equipped with A-21 regulators (or equivalent) and serviceable web-carrying straps will be provided for each person aboard and be readily available except for parachutists. (T-1)

**5.9. Physiological Incidents.** USAF PTs are specially trained to handle various oxygen system malfunctions and physiological incidents. The PT will make every attempt to resolve the issue(s) and advise the PIC and primary jumpmaster (if applicable) of the safest course of action. If the problem has been identified and/or signs and symptoms of the incident have been resolved, the parachutist and/or aircrew may continue training with PIC and jumpmaster (if applicable) concurrence. While these malfunctions and/or incidents may not meet reportable mishap classification criteria, it is important to investigate/report for hazard identification and mishap prevention. Therefore, the Trip Lead will ensure events, to include physiological incidents are reported to the PIC or host installation chief of safety IAW AFI 91-204. (T-3)