

# Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force

## Crisis Response Central Command

### Monthly Newsletter

- May 2016 -



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#### Important Contacts

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##### **DSTRESS Line**

1-877-476-7734

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1-877-272-7337

##### **Military OneSource**

1-800-342-9647

### **Commanding Officer's Comments**

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Dear Family and Friends of our forward-deployed Task Force,

Howdy from across the Middle East. Since late March of this year, elements of our Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF) have been deploying and arriving into this region of the world in order to conduct a range of missions. By mid-April our entire force was forward-deployed and emplaced, and we had assumed responsibility for all combat and supporting operations from our predecessors of SPMAGTF 16.1. (The numerical designation of 16.1 refers to the first rotational unit in the 2016 fiscal year; hence, (20)16.1. Our SPMAGTF is oftentimes referred to as 16.2, or the second (.2) rotational task force in the current fiscal year.) While forward-deployed, our mission in the region is threefold: to conduct crisis response in support of Operation INHERENT RESOLVE (OIR) in Iraq and Syria; to engage in theater security cooperation, which partners our forces with other countries' militaries in order to train together and further enhance our relationships; and to conduct contingency operations throughout our expansive area of responsibility as may be directed by our senior leadership. To say the least, our Special Purpose MAGTF possesses a robust and unique capability to ensure success in any of these mission areas. What truly enables our combat proficiency and effectiveness in the region is resident our organizational structure itself—the MAGTF.

The Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) is the principal structure in which the Marine Corps organizes for all missions across the range of military operations. A MAGTF (pronounced "Mag...Taf") is a balanced air-ground-logistical team under a single commander that is structured to accomplish a specific mission. A MAGTF consists of four major elements—a command element (CE), a ground combat element (GCE), an aviation combat element (ACE), and a logistics combat element (LCE). Multiple units from across the Marine Corps form into each of



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these elements. A MAGTF provides our nation with a broad spectrum of response options when our national interests are threatened. The “special purpose” nature of our current MAGTF refers to its broad capabilities to support a specific set of missions in support of OIR and other efforts throughout the Middle Eastern region. As the Commanding Officer of this incredible team, I know firsthand what really makes our team “special”—it’s the unwavering dedication and mission-focus of the Marines and Sailors who form the ranks of our formation.

Our task force of more than 2,000 personnel organized several months ago in Camp Pendleton, where we began training as a cohesive unit in preparation for our current deployment. One of the many unique characteristics of the MAGTF is the uniting of multiple and different units under a single command. SPMAGTF 16.2 is no different. The nucleus of our Command Element (CE) is the senior leadership and primary staff of 5th Marine Regiment, which is headquartered at Camp Pendleton, CA. Around this core are Marines and Sailors from multiple units from across the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force at Camp Pendleton, as well as the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force at Camp Lejeune, NC. These units include: 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines (GCE); VMGR-352, VMM-363, MWSS-373, and VMFA(AW)-533 (ACE); and Combat Logistics Battalion 5 (LCE). Similar to the structure within the CE, these combat elements also include many additional Marines and Sailors from other, smaller units that further enable our unique and robust capability as a task force. Organized and trained as a team in the months leading up to our deployment, this task force is the fourth iteration of its kind to the Middle East. In the fall of 2014, 5th Marine Regiment organized and led the first Special Purpose MAGTF to this region of the world. The saying that this first team coined for the task force—Right Force; Right Place; Right Time—is most apropos, as our team remains actively engaged across a wide frontage in this region of the world, conducting myriad operational and training events.



What also makes our team special and enables the continued success of our task force is the unyielding support we continue to receive from you—our families, friends, and fellow patriots. Your concerned interest in our activities, routine engagements with your Marine or Sailor, and the steady flow of care-packages that we continue to receive further strengthens our force. Quite simply, thank you. On behalf of SgtMaj Nguyen—the SPMAGTF SgtMaj—and all the warriors of “16.2”, I want to again express my sincere gratitude for your support. I look forward to providing you regular updates of our activities through this monthly newsletter. I also encourage you to reach out to our Family Readiness Officer—Ms. Darci Streeter—for additional updates about “your” task force.

Semper fidelis,

Col Ken Kassner, USMC  
Commanding Officer



## Sergeant Major's Comments

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Dear families and friends of Team SPMAGTF-CR-CC 16.2,

A warm greeting to you from our forward deployed Command Post in Southwest Asia where we are currently operating within the Marine Corps Central Command's Area of Responsibility (AOR). Since our departure from home stations, the Marines and Sailors of our Team have successfully conducted the turn over and assumed responsibility for our mission from our predecessor (SPMAGTF-CR-CC 16.1).

Depending on the location of where our Warriors are located, for some, it is noticeable that summer has arrived. The temperatures at most of our locations are ranging from the high 90's to the 100's on a daily basis. Nevertheless, our Marines and Sailors remains committed to our mission as they adapt to the harsh weather condition. Their spirit remains high because they understand the price of freedom and knowing they are making a difference in this tumultuous region of our world. During this past month, a selected number Warriors of our Team had the opportunity to serve as an ambassador for our Country while participating in Exercise Eager Lion. This exercise serves as a venue for the U.S. militaries to increase interoperability with the Jordanian Armed Forces and other multi-national forces. In other parts of the AOR, our Warriors continue to advise and assist the Iraqi Security Forces, conducting aviation and logistic mission in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.

We have begun to receive numerous letters, care packages, and comfort items from home as well as from the many community supporters and organizations. We are honored and grateful to have you stand behind us as we conduct our duties away from home. I would like to encourage you to remain in contact with our Family Readiness Officer; Mrs. Darci Streeter. Along with our Bravo Command Element, Mrs. Streeter will be able to refer you to the resources and assistances you many need during our deployment. Her contact information is:

(Office): 760-763-1253  
(Mobile): 760-468-9175  
Email [darci.streeter@usmc.mil](mailto:darci.streeter@usmc.mil);  
Facebook [www.facebook.com/5thMarines](http://www.facebook.com/5thMarines)

I truly appreciate the continuing support and love that you provided for our Marines and Sailors. You, enable our Warriors to be fully engage with their mission.

With warmest regards,

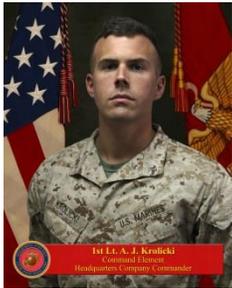
Sergeant Major Chuong T. Nguyen

Sergeant Major, Fighting Fifth Marine Regiment  
Sergeant Major, SPMAGTF-CR-CC 16.2 CE





## Headquarters Company Comments



Dear friends and family,

I would like to start off by saying how proud I am of your Marines and Sailors who have deployed to a very dynamic and challenging environment. We have come a long way since our journey began in October of 2015, yet our preparation for this deployment could not have been more meticulous. I assure you that your sons, daughters, husbands and wives are well equipped for the continuous fight against the war on terror. This newsletter serves as a means to keep you all informed on the most recent news with your Marine or Sailor during our deployment in Central Command.

Our arrival into the area of operations was not easy on anyone. Between adjusting to the time difference and warm climate to the realization that your home and loved ones are thousands of miles away can be increasingly stressful in every person's life. However, I am very impressed by the resiliency our warriors have demonstrated.

As for our mission as a Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force, we are a crisis response force and forward presence for the Marine Corps in the Middle East. In an ever-changing and tumultuous environment, our Marines and Sailors must be always vigilant as the mission could change at a moment's notice. Words from our Commanding Officer, Colonel Kenneth R. Kassner, remind us that our individual and collective workups on American soil and abroad will ensure our mission readiness and ability to respond to a range of crises and other contingencies while forward deployed. Our Marines and Sailors are poised for action, constantly looking for ways to learn, improve, and prepare for the unknown.



This month our Marines and Sailors completed a lengthy turnover with their counterparts from SPMAGTF 16.1, continued to develop relationships with their brothers and sisters in the Ground Combat Element (GCE), Logistics Combat Element (LCE), Aviation Combat Element (ACE), and the United States Air Force (USAF), and began preparing their minds and bodies for the long nine month deployment. Additionally, HQ Co. conducted its first iteration of Corporal's Course this month, a 15-day primary military education school where Marines are taught

the knowledge and skills necessary to become successful non-commissioned officers. There were 44 Marine Corporals and 2 Air Force Senior Airmen enrolled in the first iteration, who graduated May 27, 2016.



As we look onto the road ahead, I admire the work and sacrifice our warriors give to protect the citizens of our great nation every day. It is that collective effort, which gives the American people an opportunity to live with God's gift of freedom; something we will never take for granted.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Dana Point Support Group (DPSG) for their continuous support to Fifth Marine Regiment and the SPMAGTF. Their dedication to our Marines and Sailors is a constant reminder that they are indeed a large part of this family. We appreciate all you do.

Semper Fidelis.

First Lieutenant Andrew J. Krolicki  
Headquarters Company Commander

Gunnery Sergeant Joseph R. May  
Headquarters Company First Sergeant

## Chaplain's Comments

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Friends, I want to relay an article about character that I published some time ago. It is however the best explanation of loyalty that I know. I hope you enjoy it.

### Loyalty – Man's Best Friend

Inspiration comes from a variety of places, and my inspiration comes today from my black Lab named Samson. Yes, He is named after the strong guy in the Bible. My wife brought him home to us from a yard sale and he became my oldest son's birthday present. He grew up with our kids and learned to fetch better than any dog I know. He protected my kids and guarded our house faithfully.

When I entered the Navy, the news came that we could only have two dogs if we were to live on base. My wife had two 4 pound Maltese puppies that slept in our bed - that meant Old Sam had to go. We found him a home with my sister and her family. They have three young boys named Jake, Eli, and Seth.

They already owned another female black Lab named Nellie. We delivered Sam to their home on a cold rainy day along with a 50 pound bag of dog food and his leash.

The first day was tense, but soon Samson became very popular at their house. He played well with the boys and got along great with Nellie. I received emails telling me how well my old dog was doing and I was relieved to hear it. I had always been the one who played with Sam. He had ridden everywhere in my truck with me, he had been to the lake with me, and he was still important to me.

Now for the rest of the story.

I got an email from my sister with the following about Sam.

*Hey guys - hope everyone is doing well. I have some sad news to report. Nellie was killed two days ago. She and Sam got out of the fence and were running around. Nellie was run over on*



*Wilshire Street. Evidently it happened about 9 pm on Thursday night. We did not find out until the next morning when animal control called to notify us. They said that Sam had sat by Nellie*

*all night long on the side of the road. Sam has been sad. He has cried (you know whined a lot) since he got home. He has spent a lot of time in the house - I think as much for us and the kids as for him. Seth has taken it really hard. Funny thing, Sam has always been much more calm than Nellie ever was - he would come in and lie down anywhere, whereas Nellie would roam around and chew on stuff, on cold nights we would put up a gate and let them sleep in the entry hall. Sooo.....to make a long story short, we decided to see how Sam would do if we didn't lock him in the entry hall. He went to Seth's room and slept with him all night. Seth loved it.*

*Tonight the boys are having a sleep over and Sam is right in the middle of them.*

*I am really sad for Sam because he and Nells were so good together. I know how good it was for Nellie when Sam came to live with us - they were great playmates and kept each other company..... Love Julie*

There it was – my inspiration. Sam had stayed all night with his injured mate. Loyalty at its finest has been displayed. Not only that, but he was comforting the boys in their loss. This is indeed a great dog if you ask me.

I could stand to see some more of that kind of LOYALTY in the human population. Persons who can stand beside one another through thick and thin are indeed inspirational people.

Loyalty might be defined as “using difficult circumstances to demonstrate my commitment to those I serve.” In a day where marriages seem to be throw away and friendships are often shallow – let’s hear three cheers for Sam the dog who proved LOYALTY is still a good thing.





## FRO's Comments

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Hello Marines, Sailors, Families and the Fightin' Fifth Warriors of the Task Force,

I want to formally introduce myself as your new Family Readiness Officer for both 5th Marine Regiment and the SPMAGTF. I am honored to be a part of such an amazing organization.

I am excited to get to know all of you! For the Marines and Sailors, I will be coming around to your sections so I can have the chance to catch up with you. Something I have already started is Lunch with the FRO; I will provide lunch for your section which gives me the chance to talk with you while you enjoy some great food! I am also looking forward to our Bubble Soccer Tournament on 26 May! Please take a minute and come say hi to me!

For the families, I am looking to do a Family Day this summer so please keep your eye out for more information! I am anxious to have the opportunity to meet you all! In the meantime, if you need anything, please don't hesitate to contact me via email, text, or phone!

Lastly, if you are expecting a baby or have recently had a birth, please let me know so I can send you information on the upcoming Baby Shower in June!

Darci Streeter  
Family Readiness Officer  
760-468-9175  
[darci.streeter@usmc.mil](mailto:darci.streeter@usmc.mil)



To see more of your Marines and Sailors, please visit our Facebook page at:  
<https://www.facebook.com/SPMAGTFRCRCC>

**Semper Fidelis.**



## Promotion List

The following Marines were promoted during the month of May:

### Command Element

- LCPL J. SCHWERTNER JR (CE)
- CPL E. DURANAGUILAR (CE)
- SGT A. LAWTON (CE)
- SGT C. WRIGHT (CE)
- SGT A. PATANAO (CE)
- SSGT J. CHENETTE (CE)
- 1STLT C. FRON (CE)
- 1STLT J. DOYLE (CE)
- MAJ P. BATTEN (CE)

- LCPL J. THOMASWALDMAN (MWSS-373)
- LCPL J. ORTIZQUEZADA (MWSS-373)
- LCPL N. MONJE (MWSS-373)
- LCPL B. SIPION (MWSS-373)
- CPL P. HUNG (MWSS-373)
- CPL A. NARANJO (MWSS-373)
- CPL J. BRUNING JR (MWSS-373)
- CPL W. BAISLEY (MWSS-373)
- CPL T. GRIFFIN (MWSS-373)
- CPL A. YAEGER (MWSS-373)
- CPL Z. CAMPBELL (MWSS-373)
- CPL D. JILES (MWSS-373)
- SGT P. COOPER (MWSS-373)
- SGT G. CSONCA (MWSS-373)
- SGT B. SANTOS (MWSS-373)
- SGT J. PREISTER (MWSS-373)
- SGT M. RODGERS (MWSS-373)
- CPL A. WOLTZ (MACG-38)
- CPL D. CARSON (MACG-38)
- LCPL S. NOONAN (VMGR-352)
- LCPL S. EMERY (VMGR-352)
- CPL N. GREGORYLARSON (VMGR-352)
- CPL A. RAPPLEYEA (VMGR-352)
- SGT R. STEVENS (VMGR-352)
- CPL H. HUGHES (VMFA(AW)-533)
- CPL L. TRICE (VMFA(AW)-533)
- SGT B. HENZE (VMFA(AW)-533)
- SGT N. RYAN (VMFA(AW)-533)
- SGT A. JOHNSON (VMFA(AW)-533)
- SGT J. SALASCHACON (VMFA(AW)-533)
- LCPL A. MARINELLI (VMM-363)
- LCPL L. MINERO (VMM-363)
- CPL L. HIMALAYA (VMM-363)
- CPL J. BELLVILLE (VMM-363)
- SGT H. JARAMILLO (VMM-363)
- SGT C. ANCHONDO (VMM-363)

### Ground Combat Element

- LCPL G. BECK (V27)
- LCPL N. ACEVEDO (V27)
- LCPL G. MEJIA (V27)
- LCPL J. BOLIVARGONZALEZ (V27)
- CPL J. SALVATORE (V27)
- CPL Z. CASEBOOTHE (V27)
- CPL M. EISENHOUR (V27)
- CPL K. OLMOS (V27)
- CPL B. KATSCHMAN (V27)
- CPL M. CARBAJAL (V27)
- CPL T. RITTENBERRY (V27)
- CPL E. VAZQUEZ JR (V27)
- CPL M. KERR (V27)
- CPL I. PEREZ (V27)
- CPL N. CHASE (V27)
- SGT J. REED (V27)
- SGT M. AKTAS (V27)

### Logistics Combat Element

- LCPL M. CARBAJAL (CLB-5)

### Aviation Combat Element

- LCPL I. POSADAS (MWSS-373)
- LCPL J. HARRIS (MWSS-373)

Congratulations, Warriors!

