



**UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS**  
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From: NORTHCOM Regional CLAT, MCSCG

Subj: MEXICAN MARINE CORPS JUNIOR OFFICER DEVELOPMENT COURSE  
(JODC) 26 NOV - 15 DEC 2012 AFTER ACTION REPORT

Orientation: The Marine Forces North Junior Officer Development Course (JODC) is a key event in the Professional Development Line of Operation for the Mexican Marine Corps (MEXMAR). The iteration of this event focused on providing 84 junior Mexican Marine officers an introduction to the U.S. Marine Corps and training focused on weapons employment and combat leadership skills. It occurred aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD), Sand Diego and Camp Pendleton from 26 November to 15 December. The training package was oriented on individual combat skills and fitness, Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT), Machine Gunnery, individual marksmanship, combat lifesaving skills, and martial arts. Many units supported the JODC in various roles.

The Marine Corps Security Cooperation Group (MCSCG) assisted significantly in the development, planning, coordination and execution of the event working with both Marine Forces North and Office of Defense Coordination Mexico. MCRD San Diego, between the Recruit Training (RTR) Regiment and Weapons Field Training Battalion (WFTBN), provided significant logistical support as well as an introduction into recruit training, rifle marksmanship and the opportunity to participate in parts of the crucible. I MEF and 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division offered significant support as well. The Division provided MOUT training and portions of the machine gunnery instruction while the MEF assisted in logistical support. A crucial enabler to the success of the JODC was the mentorship team sourced from throughout the MEF. Eight Officers and SNCOs from diverse experiences and specialties participated in the entire JODC to foster relationships with the Mexican officers. This effort proved to be incredibly enriching not just for the Mexican officers but also for the U.S. Marines as well.

Situation: The JODC had occurred previously in different forms including an event run by the MARFORNORTH Security Cooperation Team in Ft Bliss, Texas in June 2011. Planning for this iteration began in January 2012 as an informal conversation

Subj: MEXICAN MARINE CORPS JUNIOR OFFICER DEVELOPMENT COURSE  
(JODC) 26 NOV - 15 DEC 2012 AFTER ACTION REPORT  
between the MARFORNORTH Theater Security Cooperation Officer,  
LtCol Egloff, and the MCSCG Coordination Liaison and Assessment  
Team (CLAT) OIC, Major Sotomayor. Over the next several months,  
initial planning was refined with input from the Marine Section  
Chief ODC-Mexico, LtCol Fearn. In April 2012, the conference  
development conference occurred as a phone conference and, at  
this time, the MCSCG CLAT was identified to provide coordination  
and liaison abilities.

In August, MARFORNORTH released a feasibility of support (FOS)  
message to HQMC PLU and the initial planning conference was  
conducted via a teleconference. The participants of the IPC  
were MARFORNORTH TSC, ODC-Mexico, MCSCG, MARFORCOM, MARFORPAC,  
TECOM and I MEF. In September, the planning cell travelled to  
Camp Pendleton and MCRD San Diego for a mid planning conference.  
At this planning conference the MEF, Division and MCRD agreed  
upon what they could support for the JODC. Throughout the month  
of October, numerous messages were released concerning  
supporting the JODC and by the end of the month, formal tasking  
had occurred. This was a unique scenario since the final  
planning conference occurred in mid October and numerous changes  
resulted from that planning session. In November final  
coordination and preparation was conducted by the CLAT with  
particular success enjoyed by the deployment of a one-man  
advance party to facilitate final coordination.

Mission: The Junior Officer Development Course is a key  
security cooperation event executed by Marine Forces North with  
the Mexican Marine Corps in order to improve the leadership  
capabilities inherent in their officer corps with increased  
combat leadership, tactical planning, individual warrior skills  
and weapons employment proficiency. This event will enhance the  
relationship between the Mexican Marine Corps and the United  
States Marine Corps.

Execution: The JODC was a security cooperation event created  
virtually from scratch and particular attention had to be paid  
in crafting the training schedule. This was done in order to  
ensure that it was appropriate for the MEXMAR abilities and that  
it addressed the needs as identified by MARFORNORTH, ODC-Mexico  
and the Mexican Marine Corps. The JODC planning cell identified  
training topics such as MOUT training that were requested  
previously by the MEXMAR at other multi-national exercises and  
security cooperation engagements. In addition, topics were  
selected due to the inability to conduct particular training in  
Mexico due to limited available of adequate facilities or  
equipment. Examples of this include long-range individual  
marksmanship and .50 caliber machine gun training. During the  
final planning conference, the senior Mexican Marine escort was

Subj: MEXICAN MARINE CORPS JUNIOR OFFICER DEVELOPMENT COURSE  
(JODC) 26 NOV - 15 DEC 2012 AFTER ACTION REPORT  
present and he was valuable in offering insight as to what would be beneficial for the Mexican Marines.

The training was organized into three phases. The first phase consisted of combat leadership skills and lasted seven training days. The highlights of phase one included recruit training at MCRD and MOUT with Division Schools. Phase two lasted ten training days and focused on weapons employment. This phase included training on the .50 caliber machine gun and known distance rifle marksmanship. The final phase consisted of three training days and focused on the culminating event. During this phase, the Mexican Marines conducted the JODC Crucible and Warrior's Night.

In an effort to maximize training opportunities for the Mexican Marines while minimizing the tax on supporting units, there were a number of training events programmed for evenings and weekends. These events would not have been possible without a live-in cadre of support personnel that was provided by the CLAT. Various leadership discussion groups, tactical decision games and presentations on Marine Corps history and famous/heroic Marines were given during the evenings as well as periods of instruction on weapons maintenance. Additional weekend training included martial arts, combat conditioning and combat lifesaving. Furthermore, a key aspect of the event included the interaction and facility Foreign Area Officers used to capture the cultural aspect of the military exchange.

Also outside of normal working hours, many opportunities were given to the Mexican Marines to experience social opportunities including multiple trips to the Post Exchange and a cultural event in downtown San Diego. Lastly, in addition to exposure to U.S. Marines and the way they are trained, the Mexican Marines were invited to a warrior's night. This event was put forth to show the Mexican Marines some important martial traditions in the U.S. Marine Corps and as a reward for completion of the grueling training program.

In addition to the eighty-four junior officers, there were three senior Mexican Marine officers present. These Marines were leaders from the Mexican Naval Academy and from the main training base. They proved to be integral in not only ensuring the full participation of the junior officers but they also were there to valuable insight as to what was truly important to the Mexican Navy. The cadre of instructors and support personnel were augmented by a team of I MEF mentors. It proved to be beneficial that these mentors were from diverse backgrounds and specialties since it gave the Mexican Marines the opportunity to

Subj: MEXICAN MARINE CORPS JUNIOR OFFICER DEVELOPMENT COURSE  
(JODC) 26 NOV - 15 DEC 2012 AFTER ACTION REPORT  
see different parts of the MAGTF and to observe different USMC  
leadership styles.

The Mexican Marine officers were very eager to learn and were satisfied with the training while they were quick to organize themselves and manage the group in a military manner. The officers were familiar to a varying degree with the training, but it was evident that there were some areas in which they were more familiar. They appeared to be adept at individual marksmanship with almost a quarter of the officers qualifying as "experts" on the M16. However, almost none of the officers had prior experience with the .50 caliber machine gun and, overall, their knowledge of MOUT was at a very basic level. Initial concerns about gear and personnel accountability individual discipline proved to be a non-issue as the Mexican officers performed exceptionally in those aspects. However planning oversights included the level of physical fitness and dining hours.

Administration and Logistics: The various portions of training were instructed by different units. Efforts were made to have one theme and style of instruction but, due to short coordination timelines and multiple sources of training, there were still differences in training. While the training topics were adequate, there were some instances in which the training material could have been tailored to the Mexican Marine's needs. For example, the MOUT instruction was an off the shelf period of instruction targeted towards junior USMC officers and was filled with military acronyms that did not necessarily pertain to the Mexican Marines. Many cultural considerations were taken into account with the limited Foreign Area Officer support from the CLAT but there is always room for improvement. The amount of bilingual speakers for this course was impressive and significant efforts were made by the supporting units to have the right Marines available to assist and instruct. Every supporting unit had their own Spanish speakers, the majority of the mentors spoke Spanish as well as the CLAT personnel and a number of the Mexican Marines spoke English. Although the majority of the instructors spoke Spanish it was evident that some of them were not accustomed to teaching in Spanish and they used a variety of different military specific words in Spanish.

The reception, staging, and onward integration (RSO&I) phase went successfully for this iteration. A CLAT member deployed as advance party to finalize the coordination and facilitation for this event which, given the short planning timeline, was integral to its success. Also adding to the success of RSO&I, the receiving of the barracks, gear and weapons were well planned and supported by MCRD. Lastly, the introduction

Subj: MEXICAN MARINE CORPS JUNIOR OFFICER DEVELOPMENT COURSE  
(JODC) 26 NOV - 15 DEC 2012 AFTER ACTION REPORT  
presentations given to the Mexican Marines by the CLAT  
facilitators were key to preparing the Mexican Marines for the  
way ahead and for giving them the structure through which to  
receive support.

The FY13 JODC was successful because of a significant amount of logistical coordination. The execution of the event demanded flexible and adaptable logistics coordination ability. Several logistical aspects have been highlighted from this iteration of the JODC. First, the Mexican Marines were able to deploy to Camp Pendleton via two Mexican Military aircraft (Casa 235) in one wave. In order to do this, a Prior Permission Required request had to be submitted from the Mexican Navy to the Department of the Navy. ODC-Mex was crucial in ensuring the timely processing of the PPR request. Ground transportation while aboard Camp Pendleton and to and from San Diego, the Mexican Marines utilized commercial busses coordinated through Southwest Regional Fleet Transportation (SWRFT). Due to constant changes in the training schedule, close coordination had to be conducted with SWRFT to ensure proper support. Ammunition was provided by Marine Forces North and detailed coordination with the supporting units was required to ensure timely transportation of the ammunition. ODC-Mex conducted Department of State approved vetting of each of the Mexican Marine participants and they issued invitational travel orders that allowed them to have access to the appropriate facilities aboard base.

A transient squad bay was provided by WFTBN with adequate linen and was utilized by the MEXMAR and MCSCG staff for billeting. WFTBN also provided MREs for the MEXMAR and coordination was conducted with Base Food Services to arrange for use of the recruit chow hall aboard WFTBN. Additionally, WFTBN provided M16A4s with iron sights as well as the recruit equipment issue for each Marine. The Government of Mexico has a reciprocal healthcare agreement that pertains to their military members training in the United States and, under that authority, coordination was made to receive appropriate support from the health clinic aboard WFTBN.

The Mexican Marines were afforded the opportunity to execute a cultural even in San Diego. For approximately half of a training day the Mexican Marines were presented with several cultural options that they could choose to experience. Transportation was coordinated with SWRFT and the Mexican Marines paid the event related costs themselves. Attractions included a site visit to the USS Midway and a visit to Horton Plaza. In addition to this, the Mexican Marines were afforded

Subj: MEXICAN MARINE CORPS JUNIOR OFFICER DEVELOPMENT COURSE  
(JODC) 26 NOV - 15 DEC 2012 AFTER ACTION REPORT  
several opportunities to visit the Marine Corps Exchange on  
Base.

The graduation ceremony was conducted immediately before the Warrior's Night in the squad bay. Guests were invited from the various supporting units and the MARFORNORTH Chief of Staff presided over the event. For the graduation ceremony, several aspects had to be coordinated including the creation and printing of appropriate certificates in adequate binders, the requisitioning of MCMAP belts, marksmanship badges and CLS kits for the Mexican Marines. In addition, the Chief of Staff presented the Mexican senior officers and the high shooter with individual gifts. Plaques were given from the Chief of Staff to I MEF, MCRD and the Mexican Marines. For the Warrior's Night, coordination was conducted to execute a bilingual mess night as camaraderie between warriors at the culmination of hard training. The event was catered while the tables, chairs and cammie netting were provided by the MEF Headquarters Group. The WFTBN Commanding Officer allowed for the consumption of alcohol at the Warrior's Night only due to the exceptional supervision of the instructor staff. The event was paid for by Latin American Funds from Headquarters Marine Corps, PLU.

It was planned that during the final exercise several distinguished visitors from the Mexican Marine Corps and United States Military would be present. Ultimately, these distinguished visitors could not attend but the planning and coordinating was still prepared. ODC-Mex coordinated the distinguished visitors and coordinated with Headquarters Marine Corps while the MCSCG CLAT planned and coordinated the VIP observation portion.

Command and Signal: The below personnel were the cadre of facilitators from the MCSCG CLAT. These individuals supported the JODC and were phased in at key points in the training schedule.

Maj Paul Sotomayor	Event OIC/FAO
Capt Nicholas Pisacano	Event AOIC
Capt Armando Daviu	FAO
Capt Callon Nichols	FAO
Capt Blaine Barby	Tactics Instructor
Capt Bryant Kruse	Logistics Supervisor
CWO3 William Bush	Gunner
GySgt William D Brown	Event SNCOIC
GySgt Lee Moffett	Logistics Coordinator
GySgt David Pearce	Event Planner
GySgt Alexis Mulero	PAO
HM2 Paul Camporeale	Senior Medical Advisor

Subj: MEXICAN MARINE CORPS JUNIOR OFFICER DEVELOPMENT COURSE  
(JODC) 26 NOV - 15 DEC 2012 AFTER ACTION REPORT

Recommendations: There are several recommendations to improve the Junior Officer Development Course for follow on iterations. This event should occur on a major Marine Corps Base so that interaction between the Mexican Marine Corps and U.S. Marine Corps can be facilitated. Camp Pendleton and MCRD San Diego are the recommended venues for follow on iterations due to the variety of training that can be offered at these locations and proximity to Mexico. Although officers are trained at MCB Quantico, there is a potential limited support capacity. Finally, I MEF is a potential source for the FY14 Security Cooperation Team and has previous interaction with the Mexican Marine Corps.

Training and Education Command (TECOM) should be involved in the planning process for the JODC and it is recommended that a representative from TECOM give a detailed brief to the Mexican Marines concerning the process of becoming an officer in the USMC. The Mexican officers received a detailed brief on the recruit training process but had many unanswered questions concerning officer training and development.

An intellectual analysis should occur to refine the focus and purpose of the JODC. As this event continues to mature, the training focus will conform to the needs of the Mexican Marine Corps. There needs to be guidance if the focus of this training should be at the operator/ individual Marine level, at the squad leader level, or at the Lieutenant level. Additionally, there needs to be guidance if the focus should be on leadership development, niche training, or a combination of the two.

Many different units can support this event in the future. MCRD San Diego, to include Weapons Field Training Battalion has the capability to support in the future. Their support ability is dependent on their recruit training schedule. According to the MCRD Operations Officer, June to September is busy for Recruit Training Regiment while August to December is busy for Weapons Field Training Battalion. At the end of the first quarter, the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division traditionally conducts Exercise Steel Knight and will have limited support capability. If this event will be conducted with only current students of the Mexican Naval Academy then the event execution should be synched with the academic schedule.

The MARFORNORTH Security Cooperation Team can potentially have a larger role in the next JODC. It is interesting to note that the director of the Division Schools, Major Wardman, indicated that his organization alone could have supported all of the training for this iteration of JODC to include facilities,

Subj: MEXICAN MARINE CORPS JUNIOR OFFICER DEVELOPMENT COURSE  
(JODC) 26 NOV - 15 DEC 2012 AFTER ACTION REPORT  
instructors and weapons storage. The things that Division  
Schools could not have supported were the mentorship team, MCRD  
related training, weapons and individual gear issue, troop  
movement and after hours/ weekend cultural events.

During the course of the event, the mentorship team provided several noticeable advantages. They served as one of the main methods of continuity for the Mexican Marines between the various types of training. In addition to allowing the Mexican Marines to observe many different leadership styles and military specialties, strong inter-personal relationships were built. The mentors were able to provide feedback to the event coordinators since they had formed special relationships with their Mexican squads. The fact that one of the mentors was a strong performing female Marine helped to break down previously held misconceptions.

In order to facilitate a thorough planning process for the subsequent iteration of this course the feasibility of support (FOS) message should be published at least 180 days before the estimated event execution date. Before the FOS message is released, there should be a concept development/refinement conference to refine the scope of the next JODC. In the near future, this event can be standardized and incorporated in different battle rhythms.

Various feedback was received from the senior and junior Mexican officers concerning what was most beneficial and what could be changed. All of the Mexican officers enjoyed the combat lifesaving training because it was realistic and highly applicable training. It is important to note that this was weekend training conducted entirely by the CLAT. Also, the Mexican Marines enjoyed the MCMAP training since it was so obviously related to the martial culture and gave the Marines a sense of accomplishment. The tactical decision games that were conducted when time was available were a useful tool in developing their leadership abilities and decision-making processes. One of the most beneficial things in the junior officer's minds was seeing the various leadership styles of the USMC leaders throughout the course.

The Mexican Marines offered some input to improve the JODC. The MOUT training was very important to the Mexican Marines and they would like to spend more time focusing on the individual skills and the mission execution process. Some additions that would improve the MOUT training, specifically during the mission execution phase, would be to utilize communications equipment and simulation rounds. The Mexican Marines also indicated that they would benefit from training with ground tactical vehicles



Subj: MEXICAN MARINE CORPS JUNIOR OFFICER DEVELOPMENT COURSE  
(JODC) 26 NOV - 15 DEC 2012 AFTER ACTION REPORT  
and helicopters. The senior Mexican leadership indicated that they would be interested in a site visit to the Wounded Warrior Battalion to learn how we cope with physical and psychological injuries. Also, it was indicated that the sports medicine capability at the recruit depot would be a point of interest to the staff at the Mexican Naval Academy since their students receive the same kinds of injuries as recruits. Finally, counter IED training was suggested as a beneficial training topic given the significant experience that the USMC has with this topic.

All supporting units were afforded the opportunity to provide after action report feedback. Any additional information received will be forwarded to Marine Forces North.

The points of contact for this report are Major Paul Sotomayor, MCSCG and Captain Nick Pisacano, MCSCG. Contact number is 757-962-4134.

P. A. SOTOMAYOR