



**“We are committed to creating an organization where all Marines are valued based on their individual excellence and commitment to war-fighting regardless of race, sex, religion or sexual orientation.”**



**General Glenn Walters**

### Message to the Corps From the

### Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps

Since March, we have attacked online misconduct head-on, while grappling with the fact that the behaviors and attitudes that allow for this destructive activity are at odds with our ethos. Marines by and large embrace a culture founded and steeped in honor, courage, and commitment. Concerning, however, is that in addition to perpetrators of this misconduct, an even larger number of Marines and veterans have been aware of this activity and not felt the moral obligation to intervene or report it. To that end, I have established an Interim Task Force to examine the conditions that enable discrimination, harassment, and disrespect to exist. Adjusting aspects of our culture that need to change is no small task and will take time.

To ensure the long-term success of our efforts and to clearly demonstrate our commitment to strengthening our culture, I have also established the Personnel Studies and Oversight Office. The purpose of this office is to ensure, under the Commandant’s leadership and direction, we continue to create an organization where all Marines are fully valued based on their individual excellence and commitment to warfighting, regardless of race, sex, religion, or sexual orientation. Always focused on mission readiness, we will continue to draw talent, recruit and retain the best from across society, leveraging each individual’s unique strengths, and building the capabilities necessary to fight and win our nation’s battles.

### New Office Serves as ‘Conscience of the Corps’

The Personnel Studies and Oversight (PSO) Office, currently led by Melissa Cohen, acting Director, will assess and provide feedback on initiatives that strengthen the Marine Corps’ culture and mission readiness. Efforts to assess the current climate around the Corps are already underway by way of focus groups and interviews. The findings will provide valuable insight to leadership on the issues impacting Marines.

In addition PSO will oversee the execution of the pending initiatives outlined by the Interim Task Force; collaborate with Training and Education Command on new curriculum content; and establish advisory committees to ensure Marines and key stakeholders have an opportunity to participate in the process of evolving the culture of the Corps to meet future challenges.

“Marines, veterans and our civilian community want to be part of

the solution and it is important to be transparent in our efforts. For Marines and civilians who would like to share their input and provide recommendations, they can send an email to [beartothresolution@usmc.mil](mailto:beartothresolution@usmc.mil),” said Cohen.

Operationally responsible to the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, PSO will advise on personnel and cultural issues impacting the Corps’ ability to invest in and leverage a diversely skilled and talented force.



Lance Cpl. Paul Ochoa

**General Walters and Melissa Cohen, acting Director, speak with reporters during a media roundtable 7 April 2017.**

### Priority One: Talking to Marines

Marine Corps University’s Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning (CAOCL), in support of PSO, is conducting exploratory research to gather Marine perspectives on organizational culture, social cohesion, gender bias, and leadership. The project will yield insights that can be used to shape problem definitions and refine future targeted research efforts. Recruitment efforts are ongoing as outlined in MARADMIN 436/17; commanders are encouraged to allow Marines to participate.

On October 24th, CAOCL finished its roadshow across the Marine Corps. The team visited the following Marine Corps installations: **Camp Lejeune/Cherry Point; North Carolina; Camp Pendleton, California; 29 Palms, California; Yuma, Arizona and Okinawa, Japan.**

“The research team reports that Marines were highly constructive in their feedback. Even when discussing challenging perspectives and experiences, Marines displayed a positive orientation toward the Marine Corps and their roles in both preserving and improving its organizational culture. Many participants also expressed their appreciation for the Marine Corps’ willingness to create opportunities for them to share their experiences and ideas for the future.” - Dr. Kerry Fosher, CAOCL

**New Website**

**[www.hqmc.marines.mil/acmc/task-force](http://www.hqmc.marines.mil/acmc/task-force)**

## Results of Social Media Misconduct Investigations

Commandant of the Marine Corps General Neller promised Congress and the service members in his charge a thorough investigation into allegations of rampant social media misconduct in private Facebook groups where photos of Marines were shared without their permission. The Naval Criminal Investigative Service stood up Task Force Purple Harbor and began vetting thousands of images to identify service affiliation and simultaneously they dug into user profiles to identify participants in the photo-sharing misconduct. They soon found that not all members of the Facebook group had access to the photos. Case disposition information is displayed to the right of this text.

## Case Dispositions

### Of Social Media Misconduct Cases

(as of 19 Oct 2017)

NCIS investigation employed facial recognition technology to assist in victim ID. NCIS scanned nearly 131k total images over 168 social media platforms (including MCEN).

Actions on initial investigation and follow-on investigation of subsequent reports:

- 197 total reports; 116 total subjects/persons of interest
  - 22 Civ (Non DoD)/94 USMC
- 94 USMC subjects
  - 5 with NCIS/CID, 89 sent to commands for disposition
- 60 dispositions complete to date
  - 5 Special Courts-Martial; 1 Summary Court-Martial; 10 NJP; 3 administrative separation, 26 adverse administrative action; 15 no formal adverse action)

*Information provided by HQMC Judge Advocate Division*

## Kneecap To Kneecap:

*Talking to Marines about supportive services*

If a Marine is a victim of social media misconduct (or knows someone who is), he or she is encouraged to talk with someone, to make a report, get advice and have their questions answered.

Often times, the nature of social media misconduct brings up feelings of embarrassment, anger, or fear. Support is available. Marines can shine a light on those who are engaging in this corrosive activity and/ or get needed support and assistance.

For those who would like to talk with someone confidentially, they can reach out specifically to a Victims' Legal Counsel or Chaplain. Support can also be provided by the Victim Witness Assistance Coordinator, Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, Equal Opportunity Advisor and chain of command.

If a Marine witnesses social media misconduct, they are encouraged to stand up for their brothers and sisters and speak out against inappropriate and degrading comments. To make a report, please call NCIS (877) 579-3648 or Text NCIS at 274637.

## Marines Receive Gender Bias Lectures From Subject Matter Experts

Marine Corps Base Quantico hosted guest speakers, who delivered lectures focused on gender biases within the workplace.

Melissa Cohen, Acting Director of PSO, stated that there are several objectives to the lectures. "We want to expose faculty, staff, and students to research conducted by subject matter experts, to generate richer discussion and sometimes, propose a different way of viewing a problem. We benefit greatly when we tap into the expertise in the military and civilian communities," said Cohen.

Theresa Vescio, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology at Pennsylvania State University, spoke with the faculty and staff at The Basic School and the students at Command and Staff College on "Understanding

the Causes and Consequences of Gender Bias" and how we use stereotypes as a tool to quickly categorize and differentiate information.

David Smith, Ph.D., spoke to Marines at the Expeditionary Warfare School about gender bias, leadership, and mentorship in the workplace.

Smith, Associate Professor of Sociology in the National Security Affairs Department at the United States Naval War College, discussed workplace challenges faced by women and men. Women, for example, may face stereotypes, sexism, and difficulties in getting and taking credit for achievement. Smith also addressed challenges men face such as anxiety and the fear



Lance Cpl. Hilario Martinez

**Dr. Smith speaks to EWS about gender bias, leadership, and mentorship.**

of accusation when building relationships with female peers as barriers to gender-blind leadership.

The lectures have been delivered to Professional Military Education (PME) students at Quantico. Future lectures will be scheduled upon request.