

## COMMANDING OFFICER, VMFA(AW)-224

### PHILOSOPHY OF COMMAND



The Bengals of VMFA(AW)-224 have a proud history of operational and tactical excellence spanning 69 years, beginning in the Pacific battles of World War II, continuing throughout the conflicts in Southeast and Southwest Asia, and on into the 21st century. When our Nation has been least ready, our Corps and the Bengals have been most ready. I am humbled and honored to join you in maintaining that heritage.

Our task, stated simply, is to **WIN!** Our priorities are:

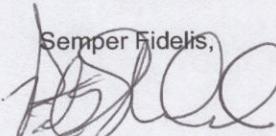
**1. Mission.** Our mission is to train to win, and when called upon, to win in combat. Our daily focus will be combat preparation. We train like we fight, **every day!** Every Bengal is integral to the squadron's mission. Regardless of rank, MOS, or department, **you are crucial to and inseparable from the squadron's success!** If we are doing something that does not prepare us for combat, then we probably should not be doing it. I challenge every Bengal to make every moment count; eliminate those things preventing you from preparing yourself and your squadron for combat. If you cannot implement necessary change at your level, use your chain of command. If your recommendation is oriented on the mission and is in keeping with Marine Corps policy and standards, I will make it happen.

**2. Machines.** The material condition of our aircraft is the key to the squadron's ability to train and fight. Our daily battle rhythm will be oriented on maintaining our aging assets the right way, at the right time, and with the right people. I expect every Bengal to do their job with accuracy, certainty, and sense of mission. The every-day responsibilities and actions of the Marines and sailors in the Maintenance Department and in the S-shops are equally critical to maintaining our aircraft. Administrative, operational, and logistical excellence provide the necessary environment for successful, accurate maintenance and a combat-ready squadron. Tackle your jobs with the same urgency and tenacity as an infantryman digging a fighting hole in Helmand or a Marine Hornet crew providing CAS in Marjah.

**3. Marines.** The Marines and sailors of the Bengals are the bedrock of our squadron. We will ensure the readiness of all, so that we are ready when our Nation is least ready. The cornerstone principles for preparing our Marines for combat are:

- **Risk Management.** Sound judgment and sensible risk management, both on- and off-duty, will ensure we **WIN** while protecting our material assets and our Marines and sailors.
- **Individual Readiness.** Train every day like the squadron is deploying tomorrow. Stay mentally, emotionally, and physically ready. It is every Bengal's responsibility to stay physically fit. Every supervisor will ensure each Bengal has one hour a day to devote to this task. Individually, I require each Marine and sailor to maintain the high moral and ethical standards our Nation expects of its Marines. I will not tolerate lying, stealing, abusive conduct, or illicit drug use. Do the right thing, at the right time, for the right reasons, regardless of who is or is not watching.
- **Family Readiness.** Taking care of our Marines, sailors, and their families is by far the most humbling and cherished task of a commander. The great sacrifices you and your families have made in these times of fast-paced operational and personnel tempo are not unnoticed. I encourage each of you to enjoy your off-duty time with your families with the same vigor, attention to detail, and esprit that you share with the Bengals each day. You and your family's health, morale, and welfare are essential to the strength of the Bengals and our Corps.

Bengals, thank you for your service to our great Nation and our Corps. It is an honor and privilege to serve with you.

Semper Fidelis,  


Peter L. McArdle  
Lieutenant Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps  
Commanding