



MARINE AVIATION LOGISTICS SQUADRON 31

CO's Policy on Safety

March 2012



Marines and Sailors of MALS-31,

As our Commandant says, "I need you in the fight." That can't happen if you or some of our gear are out of commission because of a lack of safety. Personally, I care for every Marine, Sailor, and family member—the Stinger Family—in MALS-31 and do not want to see anyone hurt or worse.

Professionally, we simply do not have enough Marines, Sailors, or gear to lose some due to not being safe. **The MALS-31 safety goal is ZERO losses of Marines, Sailors, and gear.**

If you're not being safe, you're not being professional. ORM is threat analysis and mitigation.

For MALS Marines and Sailors, I see 3 distinct environments we will find ourselves in: Garrison/Training/PTP, Deployed, and off-duty. Allow me to address each.

In a garrison/training/PTP environment, **there is no evolution worth risking a Marine or Sailor getting injured or killed.** An injury or death can crush a unit and seriously impacts combat readiness and the support we provide the F-18 squadrons of MALS-31. I charge **EVERY** Marine and Sailor of MALS-31 to speak up and stop any unsafe evolution or activity they observe.

In a deployed environment, we are still obligated to use approved procedures. We do not take shortcuts when we are down-range. When we are forward deployed, it is more important than ever to use approved and proven practices.

Unfortunately, the Marine Corps loses more Marines in off-duty accidents than in combat every year. This is the highest risk environment in which we operate. I ask that leaders exercise a little "invasive" leadership in this area. Most accidents on the road involve fatigue, alcohol, or excessive speed. Find out what your Marines and Sailors are planning for their weekends. Inquire about their plan. Ensure they are thinking of things like getting enough rest, driving a reasonable amount of miles per day for long trips while on leave, that their vehicles are in good shape, that they have the requisite training if they have motorcycles, that they have a no-kidding designated driver for a night out on the town, etc. Exercise good sound leadership. Know your Marines and Sailors.

For all three of these environments, Operational Risk Management (ORM) is a way to determine the threats involved in any given evolution, "what-if" the situation to determine how to avoid or mitigate that situation if it arises, and increase the chances of success. My definition of success is bringing everyone back from the evolution as healthy as they started. We can't imagine a combat patrol going out without conducting a map study, getting a brief from the S-2 on the enemy situation, studying the tactics used by the enemy, and understanding how they would react if they came under fire or were ambushed. Why would we not treat every other potential hazardous situation with the same consideration? When moving an MMF, what are the risks that might get someone hurt? When going out at night, how easy is it to deviate from the designated driver plan and not take a cab? When going on a long trip, do we always check the tires, leave on time, not speed, ensure we are rested, etc? Marines and Sailors are not stupid, but sometimes we act that way. Stop and THINK. Exercise ORM.

I expect leaders at every level to exercise "Excellence in the Basics," do the right things even when nobody is watching, and insist on a safe mindset. A safe environment is a reflection on how seriously leaders take safety.

Semper Fidelis,

WILLIAM C. GRAY

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