



**Department of Defense Task Force on the Care,  
Management, and Transition of Recovering  
Wounded, Ill, and Injured Members of the  
Armed Forces**

**Marine Corps Briefing**

**Colonel Willard A. Buhl, Commanding Officer  
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# Marine Corps Response to RWTF FY12 Recommendations





## Recommendation 6: Provide Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms Needed Resources

### ***USMC (WWR) partially concurs.***

- Efforts to place a VR&E Counselor at the installation continue. Challenges include identifying appropriate / private office space for counseling purposes.
- Resources should be commensurate with need. Allowing for the assignment of all wounded, ill and injured (WII) Marines at Twentynine Palms would be inconsistent with the Marine Corps' successful non-medical care model to allow WII Marines to remain with their parent units, so long as their medical conditions allow and their units can support them.
  - Marines are considered for assignment to a WWR element when their injury will require more than 90 days of medical treatment or rehabilitation; their parent command cannot support transportation requirements to the Medical Treatment Facility; the Marine cannot function in the parent command due to his / her injuries or illness; or the Marine has 3 or more medical appointments per week.
  - Requests for assignment to a WWR element can be initiated by various means, to include: the parent command, medical officer, WWR Detachment Officer-in-Charge, or the WWR Operations Section. More importantly, an individual Marine may request assignment. Each request is carefully considered by the Battalion Commanders. The WWR CO makes final determinations on all assignment disapprovals.



## **Recommendation 6: Provide Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms Needed Resources (continued)**

- WWR cautions against basing resourcing requirements solely upon the limited duty population resident at the installation. Not all Marines on limited duty have conditions so severe that they will be referred to the IDES or assigned to the detachment.
- At present, based on the absence of outstanding requests for WWR assignment, there does not appear to be an unmet demand for assignment. To ensure local Marine commanders at Twentynine Palms and all locations are fully aware of WWR capabilities, briefings will continue to be provided.
- WII Marines with a medical acuity level that does not trigger assignment to the WWR are and will continue to be supported by the WWR while remaining with their parent unit.
- Through the WWR, the Marine Corps will continue to monitor care at Twentynine Palms and all detachment sites to ensure WII Marines are receiving the non-medical care they require. When needs are identified, we will promptly address them, whether it is with regard to an individual Marine, or a systemic matter.



## Recommendation 11 – Provide Recovering Warrior and Family Access to the Comprehensive Recovery Plan

### ***USMC (WWR) partially concurs.***

- WWR supports viewing and commenting rights for Marines and families.
- Recovery Care Coordinators (RCCs) provide Marines and families with copies of their Comprehensive Recovery Plan (CRP) at a minimum of every two weeks during routine meetings.
- Execution of this recommendation must be carefully balanced to guard against negating the WWR's proven practice of a "single editor" plan to ensure plan consistency and a Marine's smooth transition and handoff between RCCs.
- Families have the opportunity to participate in the development of the CRP. Families may also choose to opt-out of the care opportunities. Families rarely, if ever, elect the opt-out options.
- WWR is working with members of the Integrated Care Coordination Committee to develop a standardized plan. This effort will establish policy on who may have access to the plan. Recovering Marines assigned to WWR Detachment Bethesda and VA Polytrauma Center Richmond are participating in the Lead Coordinator implementation plan.



## Recommendation 13 – Provide DoD RCC Training to Additional Personnel

### ***USMC (WWR) concurs.***

- WWR currently uses its RCC training to enhance Section Leaders' ability to lead WII Marines.
- WWR currently cross trains personnel via computer-based training modules. Training as a team fosters camaraderie, enforces Regiment policy, and ensures standard operating procedures.
- Expansion of DoD RCC training, where fiscally feasible, is desired.



## Recommendation 14 – Provide Direct Support to Family Members / Caregivers

### ***USMC (WWR) concurs.***

- WWR's "robust protocol" for contacting family members / caregivers includes aggressively encouraging Marines to consent to communication.

#### **WWR Family Support Program Survey (Oct 12) indicated:**

- **93% of respondents are satisfied (very satisfied / satisfied) with the level of contact they have had with their Family Readiness Officer (FRO) / Family Support Coordinator (FSC).**
- **93% of respondents are satisfied (very satisfied / satisfied) with the ability of the FRO / FSC to provide referrals and / or information.**



## Recommendation 15 – Identify Principal Point of Contact for Family / Caregivers

### ***USMC (WWR) partially concurs.***

- The RWTF cited the WWR as having the most robust protocol for contacting family members / caregivers. This protocol includes proactively reaching out to family members through the RCC and tasks commanders with proactively identifying and solving family support needs.
- The principal point of contact is the Marine's leadership (fully supported by other members of the recovery team: Section Leader, RCC, Family Support Staff, Medical Case Manager).
- WWR's care model adheres to the principle that the Marine's command must retain primacy for care coordination and be highly involved in the selection of the Lead Coordinator. In all cases, the Marine's command has the ultimate authority and responsibility for the successful execution of recovery and transition goals.



## Recommendation 16 – Educate Family / Caregiver on Post-Separation Benefits

### **USMC (WWR) concurs.**

- WWR regularly educates Marines and families on post-separation benefits. This is accomplished in a one-on-one setting and information is provided via electronic, print and social media.



- VA Recovery Team (RT) Members are identified in the CRP for each Marine leaving RCC care. RCCs schedule phone conferences with these RT members prior to the Marine leaving active duty service to ensure that all required paperwork is transferred and benefits are on schedule for payment. Ideally, an exit interview would occur between the Marine and each member of the VA RT. The RCC documents interaction with these RT members and provides RT information to the non-medical care manager or District Injured Support Coordinator for follow-up with the Marine.



## **Recommendation 17 – Require PEBLOs Brief EFMP Families on Potential Loss of Extended Care Health Option Benefits**

***USMC (Marine and Family Programs Division (MF)) concurs.***

- A specific individual with MF's Exceptional Family Member Program will be assigned the task to coordinate this information with the PEBLO.***



## Recommendation 18 – Unify Family / Caregivers with WII Marines

### ***USMC (WWR) concurs.***

- WWR will follow DoD guidance.
- WWR continues to work to improve IDES performance to minimize family separation.



## **Recommendation 20 – Specify RW Program Relationships With Marine Corps Community Services Family Assistance Facilities**

### ***USMC (MF) concurs.***

- MF will develop policy to formally link MCCS family assistance / information resources and WWR program in order to increase WII Marine and family member awareness and utilization of existing base services.



## Recommendation 34 – Legal Outreach to WII Marines

### ***USMC (JL) Concur.***

- The Marine Corps DES Counsel Program looks forward to working with BUMED to make this desired end state a reality.
- In the interim, the Program is working with BUMED and the PEB to ensure contact information for local DES Counsel is provided to all RW upon receipt of findings. DES counsel are also participating in DTAP briefings to ensure RW are informed of their right to seek legal counsel pertaining to their MEB / PEB matters at the earliest opportunity.



## Recommendation 35 – Market VA Services and Benefits to Leadership

### ***USMC (MF) concurs.***

- USD P&R has mandated that all Service Members have a DS Logon username and password by November 2013 to a site that will provide them with VA health care and other VA benefits.
- The Marine Corps issued a MARADMIN requiring this action. Within the curriculum for the Marine Corps Transition Readiness Seminar, Service Members are encouraged to take advantage of the electronic information provided by the VA.
- MARADMIN 592 / 11 negates the requirement / need to include this information at all levels of officer and enlisted professional development. Coordination with USMC Training and Education Command will not be necessary.