



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
COMMAND ELEMENT
II MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE
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CG

MAY 15 2017

POLICY LETTER 2-17

From: Commanding General, II Marine Expeditionary Force
To: Distribution List

Subj: II MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE POLICY ON CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONIES

Ref: (a) MCO P5060.20

1. Purpose. Ceremonies for a Change of Command are important events that are part of our cherished military heritage. These ceremonies serve to reinforce the unique responsibilities inherent in command and the significance of the Commander. Sometimes, the intended impact of these important events are lost due to their excessive length and undesirable weather conditions. Since most of our ceremonies occur during the summer months, the extended length of the ceremonies combined with hot and humid weather may place our Marines, Sailors, and guests at risk. Therefore, Commanders will reduce the time Marines and Sailors spend in formation during historically hot summer months.

2. Cancellation. Policy Letter 2-16.

3. Information. To establish and promulgate a policy to limit Change of Command ceremonies to one hour or less; to ensure they are planned using Operational Risk Management; and to reduce risk for participants and guests by mitigating adverse weather conditions.

4. Action

a. In accordance with the reference, Commanders will plan ceremonies to last no longer than one hour. Commanders have the authority to tailor ceremonies to comply with this time limit while preserving the dignity associated with these symbolic events. As such, Commanders will:

(1) Ensure weather conditions are a major planning factor in all ceremonies and consider an inclement weather program if conditions may be prohibitive during authorized hours.

(2) Ensure ceremonies are not conducted outdoors or in buildings or structures that are not temperature controlled (i.e. hanger bays) between the hours of 1100 - 1700 during the months of June to the first of September. Commanders should make every effort to arrange the conduct of ceremonies when weather conditions are most favorable (early morning/early evening). Commanders should also tailor the designated uniform and gear list based on the weather conditions.

b. Reviewing Officers for all ceremonies will be the next senior Commander for the outgoing Commander.

(1) Reviewing Officers and outgoing Commanders will deliver their comments in a five to seven minute time period.

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(2) Incoming commander's remarks shall not exceed the length of the outgoing commander.

c. Commanders will ensure to make every effort to de-conflict dates for Change of Command ceremonies through their respective chain of command and the II Marine Expeditionary Force (II MEF) command deck, especially during peak permanent change of station (PCS) season, to ensure multiple ceremonies do not overlap/occur on the same day.

d. Honors will be given to all General Officers participating in the ceremony, unless otherwise deferred. Honors are not required for those attending the ceremony as a guest.

e. Personal awards are appropriate and may be presented during these ceremonies.

f. Certificates of Appreciation to spouses will only be presented during ceremonies in which the outgoing Commander is also retiring. Commanders will determine a more appropriate venue to recognize the spouse of any other outgoing Commander.

g. Respective Major Subordinate Command/Element Commanders who desire to deviate from this Policy are required to submit a written request to the Commanding General, II MEF. The request must include a rationale for the deviation and it must provide a planned mitigation measure to safeguard our Marines, Sailors, and guests.

h. While the Policy outlined herein applies specifically to Change of Command ceremonies, the spirit and intent also applies to Relief and Appointments, Retirements, Memorial Services, and other similar events conducted during adverse weather conditions.

5. Summary. Limiting the amount of time required to conduct a ceremony by taking into consideration adverse weather conditions will ensure that the welfare of our Marines, Sailors, and guests are preserved.

6. Certification. This Policy Letter will be effective the date signed and is applicable to all II MEF commands, in addition to those units assigned under the operational control of II MEF during contingency operations.



W. LEE MILLER, JR.

Distribution: A