



## 1st MAW Warfighting Attribute - SKILLED Commanding General's Intent



The profession of aviation warfighting is, by its very nature given the weapon systems we employ, one that requires highly skilled, technically and tactically proficient warriors. 1st MAW is a complex system consisting of numerous individual parts (skilled Marines and Sailors); each element is part of a larger whole and must cooperate with other elements for the accomplishment of the common goal. Our ability to fight and win emerges from the collective skills, behavior, and interaction of all the individual parts in the system.

Basic individual skills are an essential foundation for combat effectiveness in the Wing and should receive appropriate emphasis. All Marines, regardless of occupational specialty, will be trained in basic combat skills – our role as an Expeditionary Force in Readiness requires that we are all a rifleman first and never far from the fight. We need only recall the actions of VMF-211 in defending Wake Island in December 1941, or more recently, the actions of the same Squadron (now VMA-211) on 14 September 2012 during a Taliban assault on Camp Bastion in Afghanistan.

At the same time, unit skills are extremely important. They are not simply an accumulation of individual skills; adequacy in individual skills does not automatically mean unit skills are satisfactory. Commanders and leaders at each echelon must allocate subordinates sufficient time and freedom to conduct the training necessary to achieve proficiency at their levels. Training programs should reflect practical, challenging, and progressive goals oriented on fighting. Commanders influence training by establishing those goals and standards, communicating the training intent, and establishing a main effort.

The training of Marines to perform as an integrated unit in combat lies at the heart of the T&R Program. It is a fundamental tool for Commanders to build and maintain unit combat readiness. Unit and individual readiness are directly related. Personal readiness, individual training, and the mastery of individual core skills serve as the building blocks for unit combat readiness and our ability to fight. Maintenance department proficiency is based on the ability of aviation maintenance warriors to provide aviation assets to support flight operations. Training, skill development, and accountability are key components of our ground equipment readiness, as well. The training environment in the vicinity of our installations contains long-identified shortfalls and little if any, solutions. This is where your adaptability, creativity, and innovation can flourish, as you advance your fighting preparations.

Exercises provide unique opportunities to grow and develop our fighting skills. To the maximum extent practical, 1st MAW exercises and exercise participation should approximate the conditions of combat, contingency, or crisis, and professionally introduce friction in the form of uncertainty, stress, disorder, increased tempo, and opposing wills/force-on-force. Debriefs, critiques, and after-action reports are an important component to our skill development and improvement during both training and exercises. Timely conduct, open and frank dialogue about identified deficiencies, and a positive atmosphere where participation is encouraged, are all characteristics of these activities. Remember, doctrinal or tactical solutions to our deficiencies must always be sought – not just new or better equipment. Advantages gained by technology are only temporary, for our adversaries will always seek a countermeasure which will lessen the impact of the technology. Additionally, we must not become so dependent on technology that we can no longer function effectively when it becomes inoperable. This is especially true of C2. You must know and master your skill now – there is little time to train in the crucible of combat or the friction of crisis.

**References:** MCO 3500.14, Aviation T&R Program; NAVMC 3500.14c, Aviation T&R Program Manual; NAVMC 4790.1A, Aviation Maintenance T&R Program; MCO 1510.90A, Individual Training Standards for Marine Corps Common Skills

T. D. WEIDLEY

Commanding General, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing