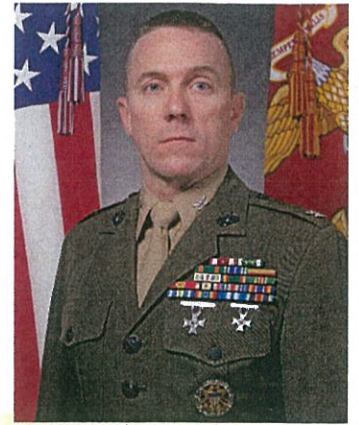




Commanding Officer's Suicide Prevention Policy



Marine Air Control Group 18 (MACG-18) plays an invaluable role in the III Marine Expeditionary Force (III MEF) mission in the Pacific. We continue to define ourselves as an incredibly capable unit, always ready to adapt based on real-world events. None of this would be possible without the men and women who fill our ranks. The Marines and Sailors of MACG-18 are our most valuable asset. Without their technical expertise, indomitable spirit, and engaged leadership, I truly believe MACG-18 would not be the unit it is today.

Tragically, suicide is the second leading cause of death of Marines and Sailors across the Marine Corps. Most devastating is that it is preventable, as long as we remain engaged and recognize the warning signs for those who may be struggling. MACG-18 is a close-knit unit and it is absolutely vital that Marines and Sailors of every rank know when to seek help for themselves and when to intervene when one of their peers are in need of support.

Suicide prevention cannot be left to highest members of the command to carry out – it is the job of EVERY Marine and Sailor. We must use every available resource to assist those in need and ensure we never let one of our fellow Marines go unnoticed or unassisted. We must be diligent in our understanding of available support and resources and encourage their use. In order to easily remember the steps for suicide prevention, the Marine Corps uses the acronym R.A.C.E. to ensure the situation is handled properly.

- R - Recognize** risk factors and warning signs: relationship problems, financial troubles, etc.
- A - Ask** the tough questions: Are you thinking about killing yourself?
- C - Care** for the Marine: Actively listen to the Marine. DO NOT leave the Marine unsupervised.
- E - Escort** the Marine to a professional caretaker.

Suicide prevention and the mental, emotional, and spiritual state of our Marines is directly tied to our effectiveness in combat and our ability to accomplish the mission. Should a Marine require assistance or find one of their fellow service members in need, there are a wide array of resources available. These resources include the MACG-18 Marine and Family Life Counselor, Marine Corps Community Counseling Center, U.S. Naval Hospital, Behavioral Health and the MACG-18 Chaplain who is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and can be reached at 090-6861-4634 or 636-3156.

We must ensure we never leave a Marine behind in terms of their psychological health, just as we would never leave them behind on the battlefield. True leaders understand that mental and emotional strength is vital to success both in battle and in garrison. Seeking help does not demonstrate weakness, but strength. The MACG-18 family is committed to taking care of our own. Have the courage to step up and seek help if you find yourself struggling with depression or thoughts of suicide, and if you know someone who needs help, get involved and seek assistance for them. MACG-18 is a critical piece of the Marine Corps' success in the PACOM AOR. We need every Marine and Sailor to be physically, mentally, and spiritually fit to help us accomplish the mission and maintain the extraordinary reputation of MACG-18. Thank you for all that you do and Semper Fidelis!

Point of contact for additional information and support: MACG-18 Suicide Prevention Program Officer at DSN 636-3590.



C. R. DOTY

Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps
Commanding Officer