



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
2 NAVY ANNEX  
WASHINGTON, DC 20380-1775

MCO 5320.12E  
C53  
28 Aug 03

MARINE CORPS ORDER 5320.12E

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps  
To: Distribution List

Subj: PRECEDENCE LEVELS FOR MANNING AND STAFFING

Ref: (a) MCO 5311.1C

Encl: (1) Excepted (100 Percent of T/O) Commands  
(2) Priority (95 Percent of T/O) Commands

1. Purpose. To publish integrated precedence levels for manning and staffing. This Order establishes policy directing how manpower resources will be allocated and distributed.

2. Cancellation. MCO 5320.12D.

3. Background. Due to externally imposed requirements, budgetary decisions, and limited personnel resources, T/O&E requirements cannot be manned at 100 percent throughout the Marine Corps. The changing nature of structure, cyclical recruiting, training constraints, unanticipated losses, and overstaffs further constrain the staffing of billets authorized for manning. The net effect is that most organizations must operate with fewer Marines than prescribed in the unit's chargeable T/O&E. This Order integrates the individual manning and staffing processes to prioritize the allocation of limited manpower resources against chargeable T/O&E requirements.

4. Information

a. Manning. The reference establishes the Deputy Commandant, Combat Development (DC, CD) as the Total Force Structure Process owner. In this capacity, the DC, CD is responsible for allocating available manpower resources against stated requirements. The allocation of manpower resources is known as "manning."

b. Staffing. The reference further establishes the Deputy Commandant, Manpower and Reserve Affairs (DC, M&RA) as the Human Resource Development Process owner. In this capacity, the DC, M&RA is responsible for assigning personnel to organizations

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A: Approved for public release;  
distribution is unlimited.

28 Aug 03

based on the allocation as determined by the DC, CD. The assignment of individuals to organizations is known as "staffing."

c. This Order integrates the manning and staffing system. It specifies three distinct manning levels and identifies the placement of units into these levels. Finally, it outlines procedures to change unit precedence levels.

## 5. Policy

a. Not all T/O&E billet requirements will be manned and staffed.

b. Units will be manned and staffed in accordance with the precedence levels specified in enclosures (1) and (2). Manning is defined as the portion of a unit's T/O&E that, within budgetary constraints, is authorized to be filled with Marines. Staffing is defined as the portion of manning that can be filled with assignable inventory. Precedence levels are explained below:

(1) Excepted (100 Percent of T/O) Command. Excepted commands will be manned and staffed at 100 percent of chargeable T/O&E by grade and Military Occupational Specialty (MOS). In the event that the inventory will not permit this, grade and MOS substitution may occur, but will be minimized to the extent practicable.

(2) Priority (95 Percent of T/O) Command. Priority commands will be manned at 95 percent of chargeable T/O&E strength. They will be staffed at 100 percent of that manning level in gross numbers. While the intent is to staff commands in this category at 95 percent of T/O&E, grade and MOS substitutions may occur due to inventory mismatches.

(3) Proportionate Share (Pro Share) Command. Pro share commands are those units, other than excepted or priority, that will receive fair share apportioned manning and staffing. While excepted and priority units are staffed at 100 percent of their respective manning levels, pro share units absorb fluctuations in both authorized manning and personnel inventory.

c. A goal of this Order is to increase manning and staffing of pro share commands by limiting the number of commands that have an excepted and priority precedence. While the intent is to man and staff all pro share commands at 90 percent of their

28 Aug 03

T/O&E or greater, this may not be feasible due to inventory shortages. Officer staffing levels will normally be less than enlisted staffing levels in pro share commands.

d. Enclosure (1) lists commands to be manned and staffed at the excepted precedence level. Enclosure (2) lists commands to be manned and staffed at the priority precedence level. Commands not listed in the enclosures are pro share commands. The reference contains a list of common force structure and manpower terms.

e. Recommended changes to enclosures (1) and (2) will be submitted to CMC (Total Force Structure Division) for analysis and staffing to the MARFORs, advocates, and CMC for approval. Changes will be considered every four years, normally within six months of the ascension of each new Commandant. Change requests will include the following information:

- (1) The T/O&E that the change affects.
- (2) The current precedence level.
- (3) The proposed precedence level.
- (4) Expected change in manning numbers for both officer and enlisted.
- (5) Any other relevant comments and justification.

f. If proposing to upgrade a unit's precedence level, the responsible advocate will identify recommended offsetting reduction (i.e., which T/O&E billet identification codes should be cut or what T/O&E should be downgraded in precedence level to accommodate this proposed increase.).

6. Summary of Revisions. This Order contains content and administrative changes. Individuals assigned to Headquarters Marine Corps staff agencies, field commanders, and other persons concerned with the manning and staffing precedence process must review the entire Order to become familiar with the new policies in effect.

7. Unit Manning and Staffing Precedence. This Order establishes manning and staffing precedence for units and organizations based upon active duty personnel inventory management processes (including Active Reserve). As inventory management processes for reserve personnel do not mirror those

MCO 5320.12E

28 Aug 03

for active personnel, the guidelines for manning and staffing described in this Order do not apply to reserve structure being filled by reserve personnel (excepting Active Reserve). The manning and staffing precedence of units within the Marine Corps Reserve will correlate, to the greatest extent possible, with the manning and staffing precedence of counterpart units within the active Marine Corps.

8. Applicability. This Order is applicable to the Marine Corps Total Force based on the manning and staffing precedence in paragraph 7 of this Order.



M. W. Hagee

DISTRIBUTION: PCN 10207900600

Copy to: 7000260/8145005 (2)  
7000099/8145001 (1)

28 Aug 03

**Excepted (100 Percent of T/O) Commands**

Marine Corps Recruiting Command (District and Below)  
Marine Security Guard Battalion  
HMX-1 (Executive Support and Other Support)  
Active Duty in Support of Reserves (Regiments/Groups and below)  
MEU Command Elements  
Joint Duty Assignment List (JDAL)  
4<sup>th</sup> MEB (AT) Command Element

MCO 5320.12E

28 Aug 03

**Priority (95 Percent of T/O) Commands**

Joint and External Commands (excluding JDAL)  
Formal Schools  
MARFOR Forward Headquarters  
HQMC Departments  
Marine Corps Recruiting Command Headquarters (T/O 5167)  
Marine Corps Security Force Battalion  
Active Duty in Support of Reserves (Division, Wing, and FSSG HQ)  
Marine Corps Recruit Depots  
Marine Barracks, Washington, DC (Ceremonial Support Only)  
Combat Service Support Detachments  
MEF Command Elements  
Infantry Battalions  
Flying Squadrons  
Reconnaissance Units (Recon Bns and Force Recon Companies)  
Radio Battalions  
CBIRF  
Blue Angels Support  
Bands  
VMMT-204  
MEU Service Support Groups (MSSGs)  
Exercise Support Division, MAGTF Training Command  
Tactical Training and Exercise Control Group  
ANGLICO