

## Chapter 1

# Unit Training Management

*“The definition of military training is success in battle. In my opinion, that is the only objective of military training. It wouldn’t make any sense to have a military organization on the backs of the American taxpayers with any other definition. I’ve believed that ever since I’ve been a Marine.”<sup>1</sup>*

LtGen Lewis B. “Chesty” Puller

Training is an integral part of the Marine Corps’ preparation to go anywhere, take on any adversary, and win! As such, Marine Corps units train as they expect to fight. This warfighting training philosophy provides the Marine Corps with an unifying goal for individual and collective training. With this common thread woven throughout Marine Corps units, and with the Nation requiring greater accountability of public funds, effective and efficient training must focus on attaining and maintaining the state of operational readiness to support Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) warfighting operations (independent, joint, combined, or multinational).

Unit training management (UTM) is the application of the systems approach to training (SAT) and Marine Corps training principles to maximize training results and to focus the unit’s training requirements on the wartime mission. (MCRP 3-0A, *Unit Training Management Guide*, explains the UTM process.) The SAT process is used to identify, conduct, and evaluate Marine Corps training. (MCO 1553.1B, *The Marine Corps Training and Education System*, outlines the SAT process.) This systematic approach ensures that training and education are conducted in an environment of awareness and continuous feedback.

The SAT process is an effective and efficient tool, not a program, used to control the mission training and requirements directed by higher headquarters. It is a five-phased approach that provides commanders with the training management techniques they need to analyze, design, develop, implement, and

evaluate performance-oriented training. The application of SAT and training principles to unit training occurs at all levels of command. Its most important product is the unit's mission essential task list (METL). The METL becomes the unit's unique focus for effective and efficient training. Once a unit's METL is developed, commanders set training priorities and allocate resources based on how well the unit executes its METL tasks and the related collective and individual tasks drawn from the Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation System (MCCRES) volumes, training and readiness manuals, mission requirements, and individual and collective standards.

The Marine Corps trains continually to develop and maintain combat-ready Marines and units that can perform assigned tasks to specific standards. Marine Corps training is standards-based, performance-oriented, and prioritized in accordance with mission requirements. The Marine Corps training program builds self-confidence, promotes teamwork and esprit de corps, and develops professionalism in leaders.

The Marine Corps training principles and SAT, the foundation for UTM, apply at every echelon of command, from the Marine expeditionary force commander practicing tactical command and control with division commanders in a command post exercise (CPX) to the squad leader training Marines to conduct resupply operations. Training is effective only if it produces technically and tactically proficient Marines and leaders who form cohesive units capable of accomplishing their assigned missions.

## **MISSION-ESSENTIAL TASK LIST**

Why is UTM important to the Marine Corps? The traditional versatility and adaptability of the Corps is being challenged by demands for a more frugal approach to operational excellence. To confront this challenge effectively, Marine Corps training programs must pursue warfighting requirements. In pursuit of these requirements, we must identify what the unit must do to accomplish its wartime mission and focus training on essential tasks. UTM guides commanders in the development and use of a METL to accomplish this end.

Marine Corps training programs are based on wartime requirements. Units cannot achieve and sustain proficiency on every possible training task. Therefore, we identify the things a unit must do to accomplish its wartime mission, then, focus our training on these essential tasks. This is achieved via a METL. The METL consists of the critical warfighting tasks necessary for mission accomplishment. During METL development, the commander needs to ascertain the unit's warfighting mission(s). Commanders analyze possible tasks and select tasks essential for mission accomplishment. This selection process reduces the number of tasks the unit must train to and focuses the unit's training program. In similar types of organizations, mission-essential tasks may vary significantly because of different wartime missions or geographical locations.

The Marine Corps' versatility and adaptability must continue to be emphasized by our aggressive pursuit of operational excellence through effective and efficient unit training. UTM is the methodology commanders can use to meet this challenge. It is important for every command element to understand the benefit of UTM to its training effort.

## **EMPHASIS ON TRAINING**

Training as a unit builds teamwork, transmits skills and knowledge, and sustains proficiency in individual and collective tasks. Commanders must implement the best mix of individual and collective training to ensure that Marines learn and sustain proficiency in mission-essential skills.

Marines learn best through performance-oriented training. This method requires them to perform tasks according to specified behaviors and standards, but not necessarily to occupy a specified time. The times indicated on the training schedule are only a guide; training is conducted until standards are met. Training's focus must be on the actual performance of the tasks.

## **TRAINING PRIORITIES**

Priority is given to training that is critical to the unit's combat mission accomplishment. Battalion and squadron commanders set training priorities and

defer/exempt training in their training plans and schedule when authorized by higher headquarters. If time or the lack of sufficient resources prevents the accomplishment of all required training, the commanding general has the authority to defer and/or exempt training. The authority to defer and/or exempt training may be delegated to battalion and squadron commanders. Training is prioritized as follows.

## **Mission-Oriented**

Mission-oriented individual and collective training provides Marines with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to execute combat-related missions.

### **Formal**

Formal training (e.g., rifle range qualification) is directive in nature. It should be prioritized below mission-oriented training requirements.

### **Ancillary**

Ancillary training (e.g., Servicemen's Group Life Insurance, sexual harassment, veteran's benefits) is directive in nature. It should be prioritized below mission-oriented and formal training requirements. Ancillary training can be conducted as opportunity training (opportunity training is also known as hip-pocket training). It should be performed when there is a lull in mission-oriented or formal training activities. Appendix A provides additional information on opportunity training.

