



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
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WASHINGTON DC 20350-3000

MCO 3902.1E  
CD&I (C 19)  
27 Jun 2022

MARINE CORPS ORDER 3902.1E

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps  
To: Distribution List

Subj: MARINE CORPS STUDIES SYSTEM

Ref: (a) SECNAV M-5210.1  
(b) MCO 5210.11F  
(c) 5 U.S.C. 552a  
(d) SECNAVINST 5211.5F

1. Situation. This order establishes authorities, assigns responsibilities, and identifies relationships within the Marine Corps for the submission of study nominations to be performed through the Marine Corps Studies System (MCSS).

2. Cancellation. MCO 3902.1D.

3. Mission. The MCSS provides a process for obtaining timely, credible, and relevant analysis to inform Marine Corps leaders addressing today's most challenging and critical questions. This Order is in accordance with references (a) through (d).

4. Execution

a. Commander's Intent and Concept of Operations

(1) Commander's Intent. The Commandant of the Marine Corps and Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps provide guidance and direction to the MCSS through the Deputy Commandant for Combat Development and Integration (DC CD&I) who is responsible for the management of the MCSS.

(2) Concept of Operations. The MCSS provides decision makers and Marine Corps senior leadership with a means to solicit, manage, and benefit from independent and objective analysis in responding to complex challenges facing the Corps. The MCSS includes the combination of organizations, programs, resources, and activities that produce studies and analyses.

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b. Tasks

(1) Deputy Commandant, Combat Development and Integration (DC CD&I). DC CD&I provides oversight of the MCSS to ensure that a responsive and relevant program of studies is executed. DC CD&I will:

(a) Assign the Operations Analysis Directorate (OAD) to manage and execute the MCSS while maintaining cognizance and providing advice on matters pertaining to studies and operations analysis across the Marine Corps.

(b) Solicit study nominations through periodic Call for Studies and oversee the study selection process.

(c) Publish the Studies Review Board (SRB) results message via Marine Administrative Message (MARADMIN), which shall include a list of all studies approved for execution and any other information and/or guidance relevant to the current studies program.

(d) Provide guidance and support for the implementation and execution of this Marine Corps Order.

(e) Conduct and maintain a program of studies and analyses to assist the Marine Corps in making force development, programmatic, and warfighting decisions.

(2) Operations Analysis Directorate (OAD), Combat Development and Integration (CD&I). OAD is the designated coordinator for the MCSS and shall accomplish the following:

(a) Provide guidance and support in the implementation of this order.

(b) Conduct SRBs no less than two times annually as an executive-level panel established to assist DC CD&I in conducting, monitoring, coordinating, and prioritizing studies and analyses.

(c) Designate a military or civilian analyst as study leader for each MCSS study.

(d) Designate a Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) to provide additional oversight and assistance for contracted studies.

(e) Designate specific OAD personnel with management of budgeting for, contracting within, and administration of the MCSS program as follows:

1. Coordinate the periodic Call for Studies MARADMIN to include facilitating availability of all study nominations to SRB participants.

2. Provide staff guidance and coordination in the planning and execution of approved studies.

3. Program and budget for support of those efforts in the research, development, test, and evaluation, overseas contingency operations, and Marine Corps operations and maintenance appropriations.

4. Provide oversight and management of contractual and financial matters for the MCSS.

5. Archive final deliverables, study abstracts, and study completion letters in an OAD-approved, searchable repository.

(3) Study Sponsor. Studies may be sponsored by any organization within the Marine Corps. Each study must be sponsored by a colonel or GS-15, or above. Studies may be cosponsored if the subject matter is appropriate. The study sponsor's responsibilities are to:

(a) Submit the study nomination that identifies the study purpose, issues, impact to the Marine Corps, deadline, and deliverable type(s) following the instructions provided in the Call for Studies.

(b) Review and approve the Performance Work Statement (PWS) or study plan developed by the study performer.

(c) Appoint a Study Project Officer (SPO) to serve as the sponsor's action officer for the duration of the study. In the event the SPO cannot continue to carry out these duties, the sponsor shall appoint another SPO or the study may be terminated.

(d) Ensure the SPO receives regular study updates and assists in identifying any problems or deviations from the intended purpose of the study objectives and scope.

(e) Provide applicable data, information, and subject matter expertise as necessary to conduct the requested analysis.

(4) Study Project Officer (SPO). The SPO is the Sponsor's action officer responsible for advising, guiding, and monitoring study performance. The SPO shall:

(a) Ensure the study sponsor is kept advised of the status and progress of the study.

(b) Advise and assist the OAD study leader to develop the PWS or study plan, as appropriate.

(c) Submit the PWS or study plan to the sponsor for approval.

(d) Assist in coordinating Study Advisory Committee (SAC) meetings, through the study leader or COR, for the review of the PWS, study plan, interim deliverables, and draft final report.

(e) Make available to the study performer any required government-furnished information or government-furnished equipment, applicable data, or assist with providing Marine Corps subject matter expertise.

(f) Conduct detailed reviews and provide written comments on deliverables, specifically the PWS or study plan, in-progress reviews, and draft final report.

(5) Study Leader. The study leader is an OAD representative on studies conducted for the MCSS. The study leader is an independent analyst assigned to the study. Prior to commencing the tasks associated with executing a study, the study leader must review the OAD-maintained studies database to ensure the analytical question has not already been answered by a previously completed study. After this review, the study leader shall:

(a) Write the PWS or study plan with SPO coordination.

(b) Oversee the study performer's work to ensure that the study is progressing as approved and is analytically sound or lead a study team in the execution of the study as described in the study plan.

(c) Ensure that the SPO is kept apprised of the progress of the study and on any issues, problems, or uncertainties that may arise during the conduct of the study.

(d) Ensure that the OAD leadership is kept apprised of the analytical progress of the study.

(e) Conduct and/or supervise analysis and ensure completion of all required documentation to include the PWS or study plan, interim reports, in-progress reviews, and final deliverable(s).

(f) Provide the OAD Support Center with a study abstract no later than 7 days after the final report is accepted.

(g) Ensure a study completion letter is prepared in coordination with the study sponsor to delineate the distribution statement for the study.

(h) Ensure final deliverables, study completion letter, and other potentially useful information are archived in the OAD-approved studies repository.

(6) Contracting Officer's Representative (COR). The COR performs business, financial, administrative, and contract-related

work for contracted studies. The COR is responsible for ensuring the SPO, study leader, and study performer complete contracted studies within the scope and objectives of the government PWS and the performer's contractually binding proposal. The COR shall:

- (a) Assist in the preparation of the PWS.
- (b) Maintain contract files, certify contractor invoices, and monitor all actions and records related to the study and the study performer.
- (c) Coordinate the administrative aspects of the SAC meetings.
- (d) Serve as the primary liaison to the performing agency, resolving routine contractual issues and forwarding guidance to the performing agency via the appropriate contracting officer.
- (e) Ensure that the study is conducted per the provisions of this Marine Corps Order, the PWS, the contractor's technical proposal, and the contract.
- (f) Ensure guidance to the study performer is fully documented and copies are retained in the contract file.

(7) Study Advisory Committee (SAC). The SAC provides assistance and advice to the study sponsor and meets to review study reports, evaluate study progress, and ensure the study remains focused on specified study objectives. Each SAC is chaired by the SPO, specifically tailored for each particular study, and open to representatives from any government organization or command with interest or equities in the study. The initial SAC membership list will be identified by the study leader and the SPO. The invitation to join the SAC will be sent to the proposed membership by the DC CD&I via Department of the Navy (DON) Task Management Tool (TMT). The invitation will include the study plan or PWS, if available. If the PWS is included, a warning not to share with anyone outside of the government will be included in the invitation. SAC members shall:

- (a) Keep their parent organizations informed of study progress.
- (b) Assist the SPO and study leader in the conduct of the study as it may pertain to their organizations' areas of responsibility.
- (c) Review interim reports or in-progress reviews and draft final deliverable(s) and provide written comments as the SAC member deems appropriate.

c. Coordinating Instructions. Marine Corps studies are accomplished with support and actions involving the following organizations:

(1) Operations Analysis Directorate (OAD). The active duty Marine Corps and government civilian analysts assigned to OAD to perform studies in house. These analysts form and lead study teams for the purpose of conducting specific MCSS studies and analyses.

(2) Contract Performers. OAD maintains a contract vehicle to support general analytical areas, such as operations research, modeling, simulation, analysis, and logistics.

(3) Universities and Laboratories. OAD, when appropriate, will contract with universities and commercial and government laboratories to conduct specific studies and analyses under the MCSS.

(4) Center for Naval Analyses (CNA). Center for Naval Analyses (CNA) is a Federally Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC) with a special relationship with the Navy and Marine Corps. It provides unique analytic capabilities that cannot typically be performed by commercial contract performers.

(5) Other Government Organizations. Other organizations (e.g., U.S. Army The Research and Analysis Center, Center for Army Analysis) are also used to support the MCSS.

(6) Other Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs). Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) (e.g., RAND, MITRE) are public-private partnerships that conduct research for the United States government.

## 5. Administration and Logistics

a. Formal Studies. Formal MCSS studies are those that are nominated and approved by the SRB.

(1) The Call for Studies MARADMIN will be released at least two months prior to the SRB and will contain the submission dates and instructions for study nominations. Studies may be sponsored by any organization within the Marine Corps. If an organization requests multiple studies, the study nominations should be ranked to indicate the priorities of the organization. Studies may be cosponsored by multiple commands or organizations, as appropriate. Instructions for the submission process will be described in the Call for Studies MARADMIN.

(2) Approved formal studies are categorized as Tier I or Tier II studies. Tier I studies are ready for immediate execution upon approval from DC CD&I. Tier II studies indicate the study is worthwhile but cannot be initiated until specific issues are resolved.

These issues may include shortfalls in analytic capacity, funding, data, or the need to revise the study scope.

b. Emergent Studies. In addition to the formal nomination process, emergent studies are those that arise due to unanticipated events and may require immediate attention. Requests for emergent studies may be submitted to OAD at any time. Studies may also be self-initiated by CD&I or OAD to align the program of studies with the current priorities of Marine Corps leadership.

c. Repository. OAD, under DC CD&I direction, shall archive MCSS final deliverables into a repository, accessible to those who meet the distribution statement requirements. Other analytic organizations are encouraged to archive their deliverables to the same repository (Defense Technical Information Center).

d. Records Management. In accordance with references (a) and (b), records created as a result of this directive shall be managed according to National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)-approved dispositions per SECNAV M-5210.1 to ensure proper maintenance, use, accessibility and preservation, regardless of format or medium. Records disposition schedules are located on the Department of the Navy/Assistant for Administration (DON/AA), Directives and Records Management Division (DRMD) portal page at: <https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/Records-and-Information-Management/Approved%20Record%20Schedules/Forms/AllItems.aspx>. Refer to MCO 5210.11F for Marine Corps records management policy and procedures.

e. Privacy Act. In accordance with references (c) and (d), any misuse or unauthorized disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) may result in both civil and criminal penalties. The Department of the Navy (DON) recognizes that the privacy of an individual is a personal and fundamental right that shall be respected and protected. The DON's need to collect, use, maintain, or disseminate PII about individuals for purposes of discharging its statutory responsibilities shall be balanced against the individuals' right to be protected against unwarranted invasion of privacy. All collection, use, maintenance, or dissemination of PII shall be in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (5 U.S.C. 552a) and implemented per SECNAVINST 5211.5F.

f. Forms. No forms used in this directive.

g. Records Dispositions

- (1) This directive is assigned record schedule 5000-8.
- (2) There are no other records requirements in this Order.

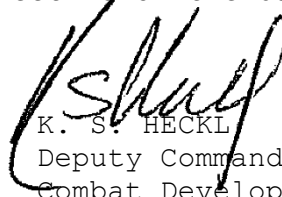
h. Updates. Updates made to this Order shall be done in accordance with the current iteration of MCO 5215.1, Marine Corps Directives Management Program.

i. Recommendations. Recommendations and/or questions concerning the contents of the MCSS can be sent to OAD\_Studies@usmc.mil.

6. Command and Signal

a. Command. This order is applicable to the Marine Corps Total Force.

b. Signal. This order is effective on the date signed.



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APPENDIX A

Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CNA	Center for Naval Analyses
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
DC CD&I	Deputy Commandant, Combat Development and Integration
DON	Department of the Navy
DON/AA	Department of the Navy/Assistant for Administration
DRMD	Directives and Records Management Division
FFRDC	Federally Funded Research and Development Center
MARADMIN	Marine Administrative Message
MCSS	Marine Corps Studies System
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
OAD	Operations Analysis Directorate
PII	Personally Identifiable Information
PWS	Performance Work Statement
SAC	Study Advisory Committee
SPO	Study Project Officer
SRB	Studies Review Board
TMT	Task Management Tool