



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
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MARINE CORPS ORDER 5600.20R

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps
To: Distribution List

Subj: MARINE CORPS DOCTRINAL PUBLICATIONS SYSTEM

Ref: (a) DoD Directive 5100.1, "Functions of the Department of Defense and Its Functional Components," December 21, 2010
(b) MCO 5600.48C
(c) CJCSI 5120.02D, "Joint Doctrine Development System," January 13, 2012
(d) MCO 5711.1G
(e) MCBul 5603
(f) MCO 3900.20
(g) 5 U.S.C. 552a
(h) SECNAV M-5211.5E
(i) SECNAV M-5210.1

1. Situation. This Order establishes policy and procedures for the development and maintenance of Marine Corps doctrine, as well as Marine Corps participation in naval, joint, allied, and multi-Service doctrine development procedures. Reference (a) assigns the Marine Corps responsibility for developing the doctrine employed by landing forces in amphibious operations. Reference (b) sets the guidelines for United States Marine Corps (USMC) participation in joint and allied joint doctrine development. Reference (c) establishes the role of joint doctrine and explains the responsibilities of the Joint Staff, Combatant Commands, Services, and combat support agencies for joint doctrine development. Reference (d) establishes Service policy for involvement during the preparation, review, and implementation of Standardization Agreements issued by allied military standardization organizations. Reference (e) identifies commands assigned responsibility for the development and maintenance of Marine Corps doctrinal publications. Reference (f) provides guidance for doctrinal inputs and products from the Marine Corps capabilities based assessment process. References (g) and (h) provide guidance on personally identifiable information. Reference (i) provides instruction of the maintenance, accessibility and preservation of records.

2. Cancellation. MCO 5600.20P.

3. Mission. To provide policy and authority, assign responsibilities, and identify relationships within the Marine Corps for the development, review, and maintenance of doctrinal publications.

4. Execution

a. Commander's Intent and Concept of Operations

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(1) Commander's Intent. To ensure Marine Corps doctrine provides institutional authoritative guidance that is timely, relevant, and compelling for use in the philosophy, planning, and execution of operations.

(2) Concept of Operations. The Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) has delegated overall responsibility for Service doctrine development to the Deputy Commandant for Combat Development and Integration (DC, CD&I). Doctrinal proponents and subject matter experts throughout the Marine Corps will augment DC, CD&I doctrine development and maintenance efforts in accordance with this order.

b. Responsibilities and Roles for Doctrine

(1) Deputy Commandant, Combat Development and Integration (DC CD&I). The DC CD&I is the executive agent and coordinating authority for the development and maintenance of Marine Corps Service, multi-Service and allied doctrine and coordinates with the Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies, and Operations (DC PP&O) Strategy and Plans Division (PL) for Marine Corps participation in the development of joint and allied joint doctrine. The DC CD&I is granted signatory for all doctrinal publications by signing "by direction of the Commandant of the Marine Corps." The CMC reserves the right to act as the signatory authority for any Marine Corps authorized doctrine. Responsibilities include:

(a) Develop, publish, and maintain Marine Corps doctrinal publications with the authority to establish policy and standards for their promulgation.

(b) Maintain Marine Corps Orders (MCOs) in the 5600 and 5711 series concerning joint, allied, multi-Service, and Marine Corps Service doctrine.

(c) Assign proponents and proponent leads (authors) for Marine Corps Service doctrinal publications and selected joint publications as identified in reference (e). Proponents are responsible for the content of all their assigned publications. Proponent leads are responsible for authoring and maintaining specific assigned publications.

(d) Assign integrators (doctrinal managers) as identified in reference (e). Integrators are responsible for the maintenance of their assigned doctrinal publications. Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to, knowing and applying the doctrinal process; facilitating, tracking, and assisting doctrinal proponents in the creation and maintenance of assigned publications; reviewing proponent drafts for correct content and content agreement with other doctrinal publications; ensuring compliance with style and terminology standards; staffing of drafts for Marine Corps-wide review; compiling reviewer comments and adjudicating reviewer comments with the proponent; and preparing required signature staffing documents.

(e) Review, revise, and republish Marine Corps Bulletin (MCBul) 5603 to provide current Marine Corps doctrinal publications and their assigned integrator, proponent, proponent lead and publisher assignments.

(f) Monitor the staffing and review of doctrinal publications and resolve issues that arise.

(g) Develop the doctrine employed by landing forces in amphibious operations, as required by reference (a).

(h) Serve as coordinating authority to the operating forces, advocates, and subject matter experts outside of HQMC for Marine Corps participation in doctrine development with appropriate allied, joint, multi-Service and Military Service agencies and commands, as outlined in the current editions of references (b), (c), (d), (e), and (f).

(j) Maintain the official repository for all current Marine Corps Service and multi-Service doctrine on the Marine Corps Doctrine website. Approved doctrine can be found at <https://homeport.usmc.mil/sites/mcdoctrine/SitePages/Home.aspx> . Serve as the doctrinal office of record for the Marine Corps.

(k) Provide training to Marine Corps organizations on the subject of doctrine development and maintenance.

(2) Deputy Commandant, Plans, Policies, and Operations (DC PP&O). Manage Service participation in the development of joint and allied joint doctrine. Responsibilities include:

(a) Represent Marine Corps interest on allied joint doctrine.

(b) Provide policy guidance for joint doctrine participation as required.

(c) Serve as the Service lead on draft standardization agreements (STANAGs) received from the Joint Staff for review.

(d) Coordinate decisions on behalf of the Marine Corps for joint and allied joint doctrine when issues cross functional lines or cannot otherwise be resolved.

(e) Coordinate with DC CD&I to ensure joint and allied joint doctrine is consistent with Service, multi-Service, and allied doctrine.

(3) Commanders, Marine Forces (COMMARFORs). The COMMARFORs are responsible for providing development and revision review comments to DC CD&I on doctrinal publications.

(4) Commander, Marine Corps Systems Command and Affiliated Program Executive Offices. Collaborate with DC CD&I to assure implementation of STANAGs for acquisition purposes, as applicable.

(5) Proponents and Proponent Leads. Proponents and their respective proponent leads (authors) for doctrinal publications are formally assigned throughout the Marine Corps by reference (e). Assigned Marine Corps doctrinal proponents and their proponent leads support DC CD&I in the development and revision of doctrinal publications. Proponent leads are responsible for the currency and accuracy of their assigned publications and for adhering to this order and associated processes. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

(a) Leading the development and writing of new and existing doctrinal publications using the publication development orders (PDOs) issued by DC, CD&I. Proponents and CDD integration divisions collaborate to ensure

promulgated doctrinal publications adhere to proper staffing and applied standards. Procedural guidance can be found at <https://homeport.usmc.mil/sites/mcdoctrine/SitePages/Home.aspx>

(b) Coordinating with contributing commands and other sources of information during the research stage of publication development or revision to ensure that the most current lessons learned and doctrinal best practices are used.

(6) Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command. Be responsible for the development and maintenance of partnered training publications with other Services. Ensure that these non-doctrinal training publications are consistent and supported by doctrine. These are limited to Marine Corps Training Circulars (MCTCs) and are not to be considered replacements for operational doctrine in the Marine Corps.

(7) Contributing Commands. Contributing commands are selected to provide a cross-section of expertise in the development and review of doctrinal publications. Responsibilities include participating with proponents and integrators in reviews of new and revised naval, joint, allied, or Marine Corps Service doctrine, as requested, and making recommendations to DC CD&I. Contributing commands include:

- (a) Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps.
- (b) Marine Corps Operating Forces.
- (c) Marine Forces Special Operations Command.
- (d) Marine Corps Installations, East and West.

(8) United States Marine Corps Representatives. Marine Corps representatives from contributing commands will attend Service, multi-Service, joint, or allied working groups to monitor doctrinal matters and publications, as directed by DC CD&I. Representatives will provide pertinent information concerning changes and progress on doctrinal matters to DC, CD&I.

c. Coordinating Instructions

(1) Procedural Guidance. To ensure effective coordination of doctrinal development efforts across the Marine Corps, a common understanding of doctrinal procedures must exist. See <https://homeport.usmc.mil/sites/mcdoctrine/SitePages/Home.aspx> for detailed procedures for Service doctrine and related documents.

(2) Terminology. To ensure effective coordination of doctrinal development efforts by commands across the Marine Corps, a common understanding of doctrinal terminology must exist. The following terms and their definitions ensure uniformity and proper coordination of doctrinal efforts:

(a) Joint Doctrine. Joint doctrine is the fundamental principles that guide the employment of United States military forces in coordinated action toward a common objective and may include terms, tactics, techniques, and procedures. (See also Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff instruction; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff manual; joint publication; joint test publication; multinational doctrine, CJCSI 5120.02D)

(b) Marine Corps Doctrine and Relationship to Concepts. Marine Corps doctrine is the fundamental principles including supporting tactics, techniques, procedures (TTP), and terms and symbols by which Marine Corps forces guide their actions through training, education, and operations that support national objectives. It provides an authoritative guide for Marines while allowing freedom to adapt to circumstances. For the most part, doctrine is descriptive rather than prescriptive. There is a distinct difference between doctrine and concepts. A concept is a notion or statement of an idea—an expression of how something might be done (CJCSI 3010.02). After a concept is validated and matured, it may become a basis for new or revised doctrine.

(c) Marine Corps Fundamental Principles. Marine Corps fundamental principles provide the foundation upon which Marine Corps forces guide their actions. They foster the initiative for leaders to become adaptive, creative problem solvers in present and future operations. These principles reflect the Marine Corp's wisdom regarding past, present, and expected operations. Collectively, they are the philosophical underpinning of the Marine Corps and the Marine ethos. These principles apply at all levels of war, discussed in Marine Corps doctrinal publications (MCDPs), and are applicable throughout the entire Marine Corps doctrine hierarchy.

(d) Tactics. Tactics are the employment and ordered arrangement of forces in relation to each other (DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms). It includes the ordered arrangement and maneuver of units in relation to each other, the terrain, and the enemy in order to translate potential combat power into winning battles and mission success. Effective tactics translate combat power into decisive results. Tactics vary with terrain and other circumstances; they change frequently as the enemy reacts and friendly forces explore new approaches. Applying tactics usually entails acting under time constraints with incomplete information. Tactics always require judgment in application; they are always descriptive, not prescriptive. In a general sense, tactics concern the application of the tasks associated with offensive, defensive, stability, or defense support of civil authorities operations. Employing a tactic may require using and integrating several techniques and procedures. Tactics are primarily contained in Marine Corps warfighting publications (MCWPs) and Marine Corps tactical publications (MCTPs).

(e) Techniques. Techniques are non-prescriptive ways or methods used to perform missions, functions, or tasks. They are based on accepted doctrine principles and tactics. They are primarily contained in MCRPs.

(f) Procedures. Procedures are standard, detailed steps that prescribe how to perform specific tasks (DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms). They include formats for orders and reports as well as control measures. They are prescriptive. Procedures consist of a series of steps in a set order that are executed the same way, at all times, regardless of circumstances. Procedures require stringent adherence to steps without variance. Failure to follow procedures may result in serious injury, loss of life, or loss of property. Procedures are usually contained in the appendices of MCWPs, MCTPs, and MCRPs. Publications that contain a preponderance of procedures are not doctrine and are considered training, technical-related, or safety publications.

(g) Terminology and Symbology. Terms and symbols are the specific language and graphics used to issue orders and control operations. They provide a common language used to communicate during the conduct of operations. Establishing and using terms and symbols with common military meaning enhances communication among military professionals in all environments and makes a common understanding of doctrine possible. Terms and symbols are prescriptive. They must be used as defined. Terms are words defined in doctrinal publications specifically for Marine Corps use and codified in MCRP 1-10.2 and the DOD Dictionary for Military and Associated Terms. Symbols are those graphics defined specifically for military use and are codified in Military Standard (MIL-STD) 2525.

(3) Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication Types. Marine Corps doctrinal publications are categorized by topic and scope as Marine Corps doctrinal publications (MCDPs), Marine Corps warfighting publications (MCWPs), Marine Corps tactical publications (MCTPs), Marine Corps reference publications (MCRPs), and Marine Corps interim publications (MCIPs). Doctrine, regardless of its categorization, is the basis for the development of other education and training materials. The following discussions of the types of publications are provided to ensure consistency across the Marine Corps between units involved with doctrine development and maintenance:

(a) MCDPs are promulgated publications that are the highest order of Marine Corps Service doctrine. They contain the fundamental principles and institutional thinking regarding warfighting and the conduct of major warfighting activities. Collectively, MCDPs are the philosophical underpinning of the Marine Corps and the Marine ethos. MCDPs cannot be partnered with another Service. The CMC is the signatory authority for all MCDPs and all MCDPs are integrated (managed) by DC CD&I CDD. MCDPs are also written in a way that can be understood by all Marines. MCDPs are to be assessed for information currency and accuracy by the respective proponent lead a minimum of every 10 years.

(b) MCWPs are publications that are the overarching and fundamental operational doctrine and TTP utilized by the Marine Corps in the prosecution of war or other assigned missions. Collectively, MCWPs represent the operational foundation of how the Marine Corps fights and prosecutes its missions in support of national strategy and objectives. MCWPs inform and influence the content of their aligned MCTPs and MCRPs. MCWPs may or may not be partnered with another Service. The DC CD&I or CMC is the signatory authority for all MCWPs. All MCWPs must have proponent leads within CDD. MCWPs are to be assessed for information currency and accuracy by the respective proponent lead a minimum of every 6 years.

(c) MCTPs are publications that contain focused or specific TTPs that relate to a specific function, area, or subject. Each MCTP falls under an MCWP and must follow, align, amplify, and further detail the doctrine discussed in its respective MCWP. MCTPs may or may not be partnered with another Service. DC, CD&I is the signatory authority for all MCTPs. MCTPs are to be assessed for information currency and accuracy by the respective proponent lead a minimum of every 6 years.

(d) MCRPs are publications that primarily focus on TTPs used by small unit leaders, or individual Marines to ensure mission success. Some MCRPs have application across the entire Marine Corps doctrine hierarchy providing harmony and understanding of organizations, and terms and techniques to be understood and used by all Marines. They may or may not

have a respective MCTP or MCWP that they align to and MCRPs may or may not be partnered with another Service. MCRPs do not contain unit or individual training standards. Training standards are properly located in training and readiness manuals but are based on accepted doctrine. MCRPs are also not procedural publications that are prescriptive in nature. Non-doctrinal manuals that include procedures throughout the text such as construction procedures, rigging, physics, or explosives procedures will not be considered for inclusion in the Marine Corps doctrine hierarchy. These are prescriptive training and operational materials. The DC CD&I is the signatory authority for all MCRPs. MCRPs are to be assessed for information currency and accuracy by the respective proponent lead a minimum of every 4 years.

(e) MCIPs are publications that introduce new or emerging doctrine. The overall purpose of an MCIP is to disseminate new TTP, based on findings from lessons learned, training, and experimentation. MCIPs are not to be used for concepts. Concepts and concepts of operations are used to inform the Marine Corps of an envisioned set of capabilities for future operations and not current best practices and lessons learned. The DC CD&I is the signatory authority for all MCIPs. MCIPs usually contain TTP, but may contain discussions of principles. Proponents request authorization to develop an MCIP using the same process by which they request authorization for an MCWP or MCRP. Information disseminated via an MCIP should be incorporated into a new or revised MCWP or MCRP that supersedes or cancels the MCIP. An MCIP will expire 3 years after its publication date unless it is extended, superseded, or cancelled earlier. Proponents may prepare an MCIP to meet an immediate doctrine need if issuing a change to an existing MCWP or MCRP is inappropriate. Once promulgated, the doctrine in the MCIP is approved for interim use in training and operations.

(4) Other Types of Doctrine Utilized by United States Marine Corps (USMC). In addition to Service doctrine produced solely by the Marine Corps, the Marine Corps utilizes and partners on other types of doctrine developed in cooperation with other Services and organizations. The following types of publications and their definitions are considered authorized doctrine for the Marine Corps:

(a) Allied Joint Publications (AJPs). These address the doctrine of military forces of allied nations in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and are targeted at headquarters at a joint level. Their development is closely monitored by the Joint Staff, staffed to all Services and deviations or conflicts with US joint doctrine are identified. Where appropriate, reservations specifying a restricted use of an AJP are included in the US ratification process. AJPs provide the doctrinal basis for NATO operations and will be widely used in NATO operations. Most NATO nations use AJPs as their own national joint doctrine.

(b) Allied Tactical Publications (ATPs). These address doctrine and TTP for land, air, and maritime forces and consist of a set of over 300 publications. They are developed in working groups by subject matter experts from NATO nations (including the US) and may be used when there is not a Service doctrinal publication on the topic. Certain ATPs are directly used by US forces, especially when allied interoperability is a major factor. Rather than having each US Service maintain its own publication, all efforts are devoted to ensuring the ATP is accurate and current.

(c) American, British, Canadian, Australian and New Zealand (ABCANZ) Armies' Program Publications. A select number of ABCANZ publications have been identified for inclusion on the Marine Corps doctrine hierarchy as MCRPs. They generally provide guidance on operating with allied or coalition forces.

(d) Joint Publications (JPs). JPs provide general principles and procedural guidance directing the activities and performance of the Military Departments, unified and specified commands, and other authorized agencies. JPs are used to publish doctrine and procedures for specific types of joint operations not otherwise assigned to an individual Military Service. They are also used to publish guidance for informational and planning purposes. These doctrinal publications are developed by the Military Services and the combatant commands, and they are approved and promulgated by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in consultation with the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. JPs provide guidelines for the coordinated employment of forces in joint operations. To satisfy the responsibilities assigned to the Marine Corps in reference (a), the Marine Corps develops joint doctrine for amphibious operations in coordination with the other Military Services. This includes the doctrine and equipment employed by landing forces in amphibious operations.

(5) Partnered Doctrine Publications. The Marine Corps will only partner with another Service if both Services recognize the publication as doctrine. Both Services must carry a doctrine designator shown on the cover of the doctrinal publication. When partnering, the lead Service doctrine process will be followed.

(6) Multi-Service Publications. These publications contain doctrine formally partnered by at least two Military Services. Multi-Service publications guide the employment of forces in coordinated action toward a common objective. Each of the authenticating Military Services assigns the publication its own doctrinal designation. Multi-Service publications where the Marine Corps is a formal partner are listed in the current edition of reference (e), which shows the doctrinal designators for each Service.

(7) Multi-Service Publications Facilitated by Air Land Sea Application (ALSA). The Marine Corps participates in an organization named the Air Land Sea Application (ALSA) Center. ALSA is a cooperative joint organization that produces multi-Service doctrinal manuals on the tactical level that are referred to as MTTPs (multi-Service tactics, techniques, and procedures). ALSA MTTPs are doctrinal manuals (MCTPs and MCRPs) that cover subject matter common to and agreed upon by two or more Services. They are produced at ALSA in a joint environment by personnel of the four Services. The Marine Corps assigns integrators and proponents to assist ALSA, as in other Marine Corps doctrine. The Director, Capabilities Development Directorate (CDD), signs ALSA-facilitated publications.

(8) Marine Corps Training Circulars. Marine Corps Training Circulars (MCTCs) are non-doctrinal publications that are primarily procedural. MCTCs are official departmental publications often partnered with another Service that are not doctrine, but doctrine based. They are not a substitute for doctrinal publications. They can contain trade specific or military occupational specialty information, such as rigging for airdrops, detailed engineer construction techniques, and detailed medical procedures. MCTCs must use approved doctrine terms and symbols, where applicable. They have no set format or development process but will normally follow the lead

Service process. The signatory for MCTCs is at the discretion of the proponent (e.g., Training and Education Command) but will normally be the first general officer in the proponent lead's chain of command. MCTCs will be electronically accessible utilizing a proponent website at the discretion of the proponent.

d. Printing of Doctrinal Publications. Coordination of printing doctrine publications will follow prescribed procedures. Printing of doctrinal publications is controlled under separate orders and guidance. Responsibility for funding the printing of doctrinal publications is at Publishing and Logistics Systems Management (ARDE) ARD/AR Division, HQMC. Distribution A publications (open to the public) are available through electronic means on the Marine Corps Doctrine website. Print waivers for distribution A publications are by exception only. CD&I, as the doctrine publications sponsor, is responsible for print waiver approvals. Users requesting printing assistance should first consult instructions found on the Marine Corps Doctrine website at <https://homeport.usmc.mil/sites/mcdoctrine/SitePages/Home.aspx>

e. Cancellation of Doctrinal Publications. Cancellation of publications will follow prescribed procedures. The final decision to cancel Service doctrinal publications is the responsibility and authority of DC CD&I. All Service doctrinal publications that have not been properly assessed for information currency in accordance with the coordinating instructions of this order or are no longer recognized as doctrine by a lead Service partner are subject to cancellation. These publications will be removed from the doctrine hierarchy and will not be considered authorized for use as doctrine.

5. Administration and Logistics

a. Submit recommended changes to this order to DC CD&I by letter, message, or email and include supporting rationale. The DC CD&I email for doctrinal matters is "doctrine@usmc.mil".

b. Copies of doctrinal publications authorized for printing will be distributed and stocked by Commanding General, Marine Corps Logistics Command. Printed publications are ordered using the Marine Corps Publications Distribution System (MCPDS).

c. The official repository for current USMC authorized doctrine is found on the Marine Corps doctrine website at <https://homeport.usmc.mil/sites/mcdoctrine/SitePages/Home.aspx>


d. Privacy Act. Any misuse or unauthorized disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) may result in both civil and criminal penalties. The 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 will be balanced against the individuals' right to be protected against unwarranted invasion of privacy. All collection, use, maintenance, or dissemination of PII will be in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (reference (g)) and implemented per reference (h).

e. Records created as a result of this Order shall be managed according to National Archives and Records Administration approved dispositions per

references (n) to ensure proper maintenance, use, accessibility and preservation, regardless of format or medium.

6. Command and Signal

- a. Command. This Order is applicable to the Marine Corps Total Force.
- b. Signal. This Order is effective the date signed.



ROBERT. S. WALSH
Deputy Commandant for
Combat Development and Integration

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