



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
WASHINGTON, DC 20380-0001**

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MARINE CORPS ORDER 5800.12

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps
To: Distribution List

Subj: AREA COUNSEL OFFICES

1. Purpose. To publish the duties and responsibilities of Area Counsel Offices for providing installation law support to Marine Corps commands.

2. Background

a. The increasing complexity and volume of legal issues confronting commanders in the area of installation law--defined as land use, environmental, labor, procurement and business and commercial law--the anticipated lack of growth in legal support manpower and funding, and the regional nature of many of the issues involved compels consolidating installation law support in single, integrated regional offices in order to provide efficient, responsive support to all commands in the specified region.

b. Accordingly, a Western Area Counsel Office Test Program was authorized on 29 January 1988. Following its successful completion the Western Area Counsel Office (WACO) was permanently established on 15 July 1988, and on 15 July 1989, the Eastern Area Counsel Office (EACO) was also established.

3. Policy. Installation law resources will be organized and employed on a regional basis, centrally controlled, and utilizing an integrated team of Marine Corps judge advocates and civilian attorneys as the most efficient and effective method of providing such law support to the commands served.

4. Organization

a. Western Area Counsel Office

(1) The office is located at Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton under the Counsel, WACO.

(2) Regional installation law support will be provided to all Marine Corps installations in California and Arizona and in such other areas as may be directed.

(3) Supervisory control will be exercised by the Counsel for the Commandant, Headquarters Marine Corps.

b. Eastern Area Counsel Office

(1) The office is located at Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune under the Counsel, EACO.

(2) Regional installation law support will be provided to all Marine Corps installations in North and South Carolina and in such other areas as may be directed.

(3) Supervisory control will be exercised by the Counsel for the Commandant, Headquarters Marine Corps.

5. Action

a. Counsel for the Commandant. Exercise operational and supervisory control over WACO and EACO.

b. Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant. Provide such assistance in the discharge of his responsibilities under this Order as may be requested by the Counsel for the Commandant.

c. Installation Commanders

(1) Ensure staffs consult and coordinate with the appropriate Area Counsel Office personnel on all matters involving installation law.

(2) As appropriate in individual cases, coordinate efforts with other installations commanders to ensure effective response to regional issues.

d. Counsel, WACO

(1) Serve as head of WACO.

(2) Serve as Counsel to the West Coast Regional Review Board.

(3) Provide timely, responsive, and comprehensive installation law support to all commanders and their staffs in the Western Area.

(4) Coordinate with regional staff judge advocates to ensure most effective and efficient employment of respective resources in order to avoid duplication of effort.

(5) Maintain a regional filing system or data base for legal issues within the area of responsibility.

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d. Counsel, EACO

(1) Serve as head of EACO.

(2) Serve as Counsel to the East Coast Regional Review Board.

(3) Provide timely, responsive, and comprehensive installation law support to all commanders and their staffs in the Eastern Area.

(4) Coordinate with regional staff judge advocates to ensure most effective and efficient employment of respective resources in order to avoid duplication of effort.

(5) Maintain a regional filing system or data base for legal issues within the area of responsibility.

6. Reserve Applicability. This Order is not applicable to the Marine Corps Reserve.



J. J. WENT
Assistant Commandant
of the Marine Corps
and Chief of Staff

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