



Family Readiness Council Meeting Minutes

October 22, 2009

Meeting Convened: 1330

In Attendance: Please see below

Welcome

Thank you all for attending. Everyone seated at the tables are voting members of the Family Readiness Council. This includes Marine Corps Family Team Building staff, Unit Command Teams, Station Chaplain, and Station SgtMaj. Everyone seated in the back of the room are supporting members.

a. In attendance:

- i. MCFTB
 1. Director
 2. Admin
 3. RDST
 4. LINKS Trainer
 5. FRPT
 6. Lifeskills Trainer
 7. Japanese LINKS Trainer
- ii. MCCS Coordinator
- iii. Station SgtMaj
- iv. Station Chaplain
- v. H&HS Sergeant Major
- vi. H&HS XO
- vii. H&HS FRO
- viii. EFMP, H&HS Advisor
- ix. MALS-12 FRO
- x. MALS-12 FRO
- xi. CLC-36 FRO
- xii. CLC-36 Advisor
- xiii. CLC-36 Advisor
- xiv. MAG-12 FRO
- xv. MAG-12 Advisor
- xvi. M&FS Director
- xvii. MWSS-171 Advisor
- xviii. MWSS-171 FRO
- xix. MWSS 171 XO
- xx. MWSS 171 Assistant
- xxi. MWSS 171
- xxii. VMFA(AW) 242 FRO
- xxiii. VMFA(AW) 242 XO
- xxiv. VMFA(AW) 242 Advisor
- xxv. VMFA(AW) 242 Advisor
- xxvi. Station Advisor
- xxvii. MCCS SNCOIC/Acting MCCS Deputy Director
- xxviii. MFLC
- xxix. MFLC

*MACS-4 FRO, School Liaison, MCCS Director, CDC, Medical Ombudsman, Dental Ombudsman, ORCS, CYT, New Parents Support, MCCS Marketing, SMP, and Counseling Services were invited but not in attendance.

I. Review minutes of prior Council meeting July 22, 2009

a. Family Readiness Assessment Tool is on hold for MARFORPAC

FRAT is still on hold.

b. On-site childcare

MCFTB is working diligently to begin offering on-site child care during classes at Yujo Hall. This will hopefully increase class participation. Liaison with legal counsel in Okinawa has been made to ensure all legal aspects have been covered. Approval to hire a flex child care provider has been given and will hopefully be completed in November.

c. Website Improvements

MCCS website is currently being redesigned so immediate changes to the MCFTB page is not possible. However, MCFTB admin is in the process of creating and uploading more documents to the MCFTB webpage.

1. Who Is My FRO? – lists all MCAS Iwakuni Family Readiness Officers and their contact information
2. 90 day calendar – one calendar that will list all Marine Corps Family Team Building classes for a 3 month period
3. Classes by demographic – Classes for Marines, Classes for Spouses, Classes for Kids. Website visitors will be able to click on one of these Word documents for a complete listing of the classes with a brief description for Marines, Spouses, or Kids.

d. Medical and Dental Ombudsmen

Medical and dental ombudsmen have been identified but have not yet received final authorization from CO Naval Hospital Yokosuka. Ombudsmen were invited to FR Council Meeting but did not attend.

e. Japanese Spouse Orientation

The Japanese LINKS trainer has revised the Japanese Spouse Orientation schedule to now include topics and speakers included in the Welcome Aboard Indoctrination.

II. Introductions

- i. Mr. Edward Hutsell is the interim director of MCCS Iwakuni. He was unable to attend the Council meeting.
- ii. Military Family Life Consultants were introduced. They offer counseling services to all SOFA status personnel. MFLC services are off the record and completely confidential. They can meet wherever the member feels comfortable except for the family home.
- iii. MCFTB director, Nina Woods, will be resigning 06 Nov 09. The position has been advertised and closed on 16 Oct 09.

III. Topics of Discussion

a. Any issued from Command Teams concerning Family Readiness?

- i. H&HS FRO stated that a spouse in her Unit has inquired as to why there are not organized sports for adult family members aboard the Air Station. There are many great youth sport activities but none for adults. MCCS Coordinator will inquire.

- ii. Station SgtMaj: Is there any way to provide more support to the Contractors living and working in our community? Station Advisor suggested checking with PAO or Mr. Dave Garber find out when contractors are checking in to Iwakuni. M&FS director will find out if Information, Referral & Relocation keep a list or if it can be incorporated into the Welcome Aboard Process.
- iii. H&HS SgtMaj: Has any follow up been done regarding children with fever being sent home from the CDC but not being able to be seen at the Clinic. It had been mentioned to CDC supervisor, but that is the guideline they must follow. Unfortunately, this would require policy change for either the CDC or the Clinic, and at this time this is not possible due to Op. Nav. Instruction 1700 9E. CDC supervisor and clinic personnel were not in attendance.
- iv. H&HS SgtMaj: Male spouses are feeling ignored. The commercials and many of the classes seem to be aimed at female spouses. Poll of the units for the number of male spouses: H&HS – 6 total (2 with deployed sponsors); MALS 12 – 8 total (6 asked not to be contacted); CLC 36 – 1 ; MWSS 171 – 1; VMFA(AW) 242 – 1; MAG 12 – 0. Although the numbers are low, we need to be mindful that there are male spouse dependents and in the future correspondence should be gender neutral.
- v. MALS 12 CO: Station Post Office has said no more flyers can be sent from the FRO via MPS. According to the new CG MARFORPAC Draft Family Readiness Policy Statement FROs should send out newsletters twice a month. While email is available, the mailed hardcopy newsletter is still very useful. Can base personnel address this issue with the Post Office? H&HS SgtMaj stated the Postal Officer is currently deployed. The issue had already been address with the postal officer prior to departure. There is regulation addressing the use of MPS for official communication, but in light of the new Policy Statement it can be readdressed with the current Postal Officer. MALS 12 CO followed up after the meeting and progress is underway, requiring no further action on the part of MCFTB.
- vi. H&HS FRO: Has MCCA catering prices gone up? There seems to be a significant increase from last year's prices to this year for Unit holiday events.
MAG 12 FRO: Is there is a way for Unit prices to be more comparable to the weekly lunch buffet prices?
MCCA Coordinator: The NAF allocation of \$25 per Marine for each unit is a significant amount of money. Each unit must decide how to spend that money whether it is for one large function or for multiple functions.
MAG 12 FRO: This amount is the same amount given to units stateside. These FROs have more shopping options than we have here. It is difficult to have a nice function because the unit numbers are lower.
MCCA SNCOIC: Stateside Marines also don't get the extra \$2000 per month in COLA.
Station advisor: When FROs are planning a function do they have to pay for tents, tables, bounce house, etc?
MCCA Coordinator: All of these services are free in Iwakuni. It is the only base these items are free. MCCA Coordinator will talk to Food & Hospitality director regarding the increase in catering prices.

b. Command Representation in MCFTB classes

FROs and COs received a break down in the number of participants in MCFTB classes for 2009 per unit.

- i. Voting members, given the option of monthly or quarterly, voted to have participant number updates quarterly sent to Unit Commanding Officers and FROs quarterly.
- ii. Just a reminder that any MCFTB class/training can be done Unit specific. Any of the trainers can come out to your location and conduct trainings for members of your unit.

Station SgtMaj asked to present unit participation information more simply for next quarter. H&HS XO asked for the actual number of participants per unit to be listed for next quarter as well.

c. Results of Single Marine Readiness knowledge survey and November Preview article

- i. MCCS Coordinator conducted survey for single Marines at the Hornet's Nest and the Single Marine Lounge. The survey was conducted to see what single Marines know about the Family Readiness Program and Marine Corps Family Team Building. Results showed that the majority knew who their Family Readiness Officer is and the services they provide. However, only 49% knew about Marine Corps Family Team Building and what services are offered. Station SgtMaj asked if we knew who actually took the survey because many UDPs utilize the Single Marine Lounge and Hornets Nest. If UDPs took the survey, the results could have been skewed.
- ii. MCFTB decided to focus the November Preview article on getting the single and unaccompanied Marines and Sailors involved. The article and crossword puzzle contest was handed out to attendees. The contest will run from 01 – 30 Nov 09. The prize will be 10 free haircuts at the barber shop or a \$75 gift certificate for the MCX. Hopefully this will get the single Marines to read the article and learn more about Marine Corps Family Team Building. MCCS SNCOIC suggested having the contest every month to get more involvement since the rotations are so frequent here.

d. The Many Faces of Family Campaign

The current MCFTB commercial that airs on AFN will be removed. It incorrectly represents our message. We are working with Marketing to try to create a new commercial. The idea is to have MCFTB staff members walk around and randomly ask people their idea of family. We want to change the thought of "family" for Marines and Sailors to include the family they were born into, sworn into and married into. The commercial will hopefully be on air before May, when MCFTB plans to kick off the "Many Faces of Family" campaign with the Welcome to Las Vegas class. We want Las Vegas to be a huge event that kicks off the Many Faces campaign.

- i. RDST: The event is a fun way to learn about all the resources available in the Corps and on Station. The first class was held in July but the number of participants was very low. There were many single Marine volunteers, and unfortunately they didn't know the answers to many of the questions that were asked as part of the class.
- ii. MCFTB Admin: There were many single Marines that came to volunteer for the event in July, but next time we'd like the single Marines to actually participate in the class. Our idea is to have MCFTB staff and Command Teams work the event so that single Marines, spouses, and other can come to enjoy the event.

More to come.....

e. Yard work/maintenance

- i. MCFTB is currently in the planning stages of implementing a program to have volunteers that do lawn care for spouses enduring deployment. Any suggestions?

Station SgtMaj: Is there really a need for this? This should be something Unit specific. If a spouse needs help, he or she should be comfortable contacting the FRO. Marines take care of Marines.

H&HS SgtMaj: This is probably stepping into sketchy waters. There are a lot of organizations that are willing to volunteer and maybe it should be done through private orgs instead of a program through MCCA or MCFTB.

H&HS FRO: We need to teach spouses to be more self sufficient.

VMFA(AW) 242 Advisor: Housing is very fair about giving notices and allowing sufficient time to get the lawn work done.

Lifeskills trainer: Maybe we should wait until Spring to see if there is a need, and maybe a list of volunteers can just be kept on file.

MCFTB director: We saw a need and know there are a lot of volunteers and we wanted to connect the two. MCFTB would be the connection between housing and SMP to verify who qualifies. The program is still very young and needs to be streamlined. Please continue to send any suggestions to MCFTB director or RDST.

IV. Concerns/Comments/Questions?

a. Ombudsmen

Station Chaplain: Why are they not in attendance?

MCFTB director: They were invited but unable to attend.

H&HS SgtMaj: Are they like the FROs? Are they able to inform CO or SgtMaj when a family member is hospitalized? The Command Teams need to know when a family member of their unit is hospitalized. Don't really need to know the details or the reason, but just that they are in the hospital so a Command visit can be made.

Station SgtMaj: They are very similar to a FRO. The Ombudsmen should work more closely with the Senior Enlisted Leader, whereas the FRO works for the CO.

Station Advisor: The Red Cross is having the same problem trying to get information when people are hospitalized. Maybe talk to Katherine from the Red Cross about resolution.

b. Mass Communication Tool (MCT)

MALS 12 CO: A lot of frustration with MCT. There have been many changes/updates to the spreadsheet so every time the information is added onto the current spreadsheet, a new spreadsheet is sent out from HQ and it needs to be done all over. Can MCFTB contact HQ and ask if we can hold off using the new spreadsheet until there is a final draft?

FRPT: The current changes for the spreadsheet came from a survey that FROs took over the summer. The new spreadsheet reflects the changes that many FROs suggested.

Currently the FRPT is working one on one with the FROs aboard MCAS Iwakuni to help with the changes. Most of the info should be able to be copied & pasted. In the future the Mass Communication Tool and Marine Online will communicate but there is no date for that as of now. MALS 12 CO was satisfied with the answer requiring no further action by MCFTB.

V. Closing Remarks

- a. Next Family Readiness Council Meeting is scheduled to take place on:

January 22, 2010 at 1330 in the Yujo Hall Multipurpose Room

- b. Minutes for this meeting will be provided on the MCFTB website.

Meeting Adjourned: 1455