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SUBJ/DON ALCOHOL ABUSE PREVENTION AND DEGLAMORIZATION CAMPAIGN

RMKS/1. THE NAVY/MARINE CORPS TEAM IS THE MOST PROFESSIONAL, HIGHLY TRAINED AND CAPABLE FORCE IN THE WORLD AND OUR SAILORS AND MARINES FUNCTION IN A HIGHLY COMPLEX, TECHNOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT REQUIRING 100 PERCENT OF THEIR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL ABILITIES. ALCOHOL ABUSE SIGNIFICANTLY DETRACTS FROM THIS READINESS AND MUST BE ADDRESSED AT ALL LEVELS OF COMMAND. IT IMPAIRS HEALTH AND FITNESS THROUGHOUT THE DEPARTMENT AND HAS A DIRECT INFLUENCE ON THE NUMBER OF DEATHS, INJURIES, LOST WORK DAYS AND INCIDENTS, RANGING FROM MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS TO ABUSE AND VIOLENCE.

2. THIS MESSAGE ANNOUNCES A COMPREHENSIVE ALCOHOL ABUSE PREVENTION AND DEGLAMORIZATION CAMPAIGN FOR THE DON REQUIRING ALL NAVY AND MARINE CORPS LEADERS, FROM THE MOST SENIOR OFFICERS TO THE MOST JUNIOR ENLISTED, TO DEMONSTRATE THE SAME LEADERSHIP, RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY THAT WE APPLY TO ALL READINESS AREAS. IT STARTS WITH SETTING THE RIGHT PERSONAL EXAMPLE AND ESTABLISHING THE RIGHT CLIMATE IN ALL OUR COMMANDS.

3. THIS CAMPAIGN STRESSES LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY, COMMAND RESPONSIBILITY, SHIPMATE/FELLOW MARINE RESPONSIBILITY, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY. EACH SAILOR AND MARINE IS ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE AND WILL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR OWN ACTIONS. GUIDANCE, EDUCATION, COUNSELING AND TREATMENT WILL CONTINUE TO BE AVAILABLE AND ENHANCED FOR THOSE WHO NEED IT, BUT TO BE EFFECTIVE, THESE RESOURCES MUST BE USED BEFORE THERE IS AN INCIDENT.

4. AFTER CONSULTATION WITH THE CNO AND COMMANDANT, I AM DIRECTING A POLICY CHANGE ELIMINATING UNDERAGE DRINKING AT ALL DON ACTIVITIES. THE LEGAL DRINKING AGE IN ALL STATES EXCEPT LOUISIANA IS 21. BY WAY OF EXCEPTION, WE HAVE ALLOWED NAVY/MARINE CORPS INSTALLATIONS WITHIN 50 MILES OF A FOREIGN COUNTRY WITH A LOWER DRINKING AGE (SUCH AS MEXICO) TO DEVIATE FROM LOCAL STATE LAW. EFFECTIVE 1 APRIL 96, ALL DON BASES/INSTALLATIONS WILL STRICTLY CONFORM TO THE DRINKING AGE LIMITATIONS OF THE STATE OR COUNTRY IN WHICH THEY ARE LOCATED. THIS WILL REVOKE ALL PREVIOUS EXEMPTIONS AND REQUIRE EACH CONUS BASE/INSTALLATION TO CONFORM TO LOCAL COUNTRY LAW BUT IN NO CASE WILL DRINKING BE PERMITTED BELOW THE AGE OF 18.

5. FINALLY, ANY PERCEPTION THAT ALCOHOL IS CENTRAL TO OUR TRADITIONS IS WRONG. DEGLAMORIZATION, READY AVAILABILITY OF NON-ALCOHOLIC ALTERNATIVES, AND DEMONSTRATING THE RIGHT PERSONAL AND COMMAND EXAMPLE AT ALL TIMES ARE PROACTIVE MEASURES I WANT TO SEE THROUGHOUT THE NAVY AND MARINE CORPS TO REDUCE ALCOHOL ABUSE AND THE INCIDENTS IT CAUSES.

6. THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS AND THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS WILL SOON ANNOUNCE ADDITIONAL ALTERNATIVES AS PART OF THE NAVY'S "RIGHT SPIRIT" AND THE MARINE CORPS' "SEMPER FIT" CAMPAIGNS. TOGETHER, WE WILL MAINTAIN THE MAXIMUM STATE OF READINESS WHILE ACHIEVING THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF GOOD ORDER AND DISCIPLINE.

7. RELEASED BY THE HONORABLE JOHN H. DALTON, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.//BT