UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

Marine Corps Suicide Prevention Program (MCSPP)

DoD Task Force on the Prevention of Suicide among Members of the Armed Forces

1 October 2009

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# Manner of Death

## CY 2008 Ranking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USMC</th>
<th>USN</th>
<th>DON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Accident</td>
<td>1. Accident</td>
<td>1. Accident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Hostile Action</td>
<td>2. Natural Causes</td>
<td>2. Suicide</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Feb 2009
A DoD workgroup is meeting to assess and standardize suicide attempt data reporting across all Services. USMC is finalizing SOP for using DODSER to collect data on suicide attempts. Expected 1 January 2010

*Includes 9 suspected suicides that have yet to be confirmed by the Armed Forces Medical Examiner.
2001-2009 suicide data is standardized in accord with DoD policy. 2003-2009 data was obtained from START database. 2000-2002 data was manually entered. Source: HQMC (MRS-4) 2009Sep21
USMC Suicides with Deployment History (confirmed and suspected)

2001-2007 final rates were within range of expected fluctuations around mean of 14.9/100,000

CY2008 final rate was outside of that range

*Last available civilian suicide rate information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Rate adjusted for Marine demographics.

**Through 31 August

Includes 9 suspected suicides that have yet to be confirmed by the Armed Forces Medical Examiner.

Data from 2001-2008 has been standardized in accord with DoD policy.

Source: HQMC (MRS-4) 2009Sep21

69% of currently active Marines have been deployed in support of OIF/OEF.

73% of Marine suicides in CY2009 have a deployment history.
## CY09 Suicide Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>37 Male</th>
<th>0 Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>28 Caucasian</td>
<td>3 African American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>27 (18-24)</td>
<td>5 (25-29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>16 Single</td>
<td>18 Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paygrade</td>
<td>19 (E1-E3)</td>
<td>15 (E4-E5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method</td>
<td>22 Gunshot</td>
<td>12 Hanging</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2009 Month</th>
<th>Suspected Suicides</th>
<th>Suicide Attempts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Through 31 August 2009
Demographic Risk Factors

**Age**
Most Marines to die by suicide are 18-25 years old

**Pay Grade**
Junior Marines and NCO are most likely to die by suicide

**MOS**
Infantry is most likely MOS to die by suicide

**Deployment History**
Deployed Marines are not over-represented in suicides
Current Program Initiatives

Training Requirements

- **Enlisted Training**
  - Annual Awareness Training
  - Recruit Training in Boot Camp
  - Commanders All-Hands Stand-down (March 2009)
  - NCO Suicide Prevention Course
  - Leadership Continuum Training in all formal schools
  - Web-based distance learning course
  - Frontline Supervisors Training

- **Officer Training**
  - Annual Awareness Training
  - Commanders All-Hands Stand-down (March 2009)
  - Leadership Continuum Training in all formal schools
  - Web-based distance learning course
  - Frontline Supervisors Training

- **Provider Training**
  - Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk
  - DoD/VA Military Suicide Prevention Conference

- **Other Training**
  - Pre, Re, and Post-Deployment Cycle Training (MOSST)
  - Marine Corps Martial Arts Program
  - Are You Listening Training (recreation/retail staff)
  - DoD/VA Military Suicide Prevention Conference
  - Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)
  - Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR)

Other Initiatives

- **Leadership**
  - Video Messages
    - CMC and SMMC
    - Generals and Sergeants Major

- **Regional Coordinators**
  - Installation and command based
    - 23 Civ positions to provide single point of contact

- **Research**
  - NIMH / Army / Marine Corps - STARRS
    - 5-Year Longitudinal Study
  - USUHS – NCO Course Program Evaluation
  - MCCDC – USMC Unique Factors in Suicide Risk
  - USUHS – Dissertation: Deployment Related Factors in USMC and Air Force

- **Marketing, Education**
  - Brochures, Posters, Wallet Cards
    - Relationship Focus, R.A.C.E.
  - Leaders Guide for Managing Marines in Distress
    - Website and Pocket Guide
  - MCSPP Website
  - DoD/VA Suicide Prevention Conference

- **Staffing**
  - Three new hires at HQMC to support new requirements: Two Program Analysts, one Admin Support Specialist
  - Special Assigned: Senior Enlisted Leader Consultant

Collaborative Programs

- **Installation Support Services**
  - Chain of Command
  - Unit Medical
  - Unit Chaplain
  - Unit Personal and Family Readiness Program
  - Marine and Family Services
  - Prevention and Intervention Services
  - Medical Treatment Facility
  - Deployment Health Clinic
  - Marine Corps Family Team Building
  - Navy Marine Corps Relief Society
  - Combat Operational Stress Control
  - Operational Stress Control and Readiness (OSCAR)
  - Substance Abuse Rehab Program
  - Financial Counseling Program
  - Family Advocacy Program
  - Single Marine Program

- **National Support Services**
  - Federal Suicide Prevention Lifeline
  - DCoE Outreach Call Center
  - Military OneSource
  - Military Mental Health Self-Assessment
  - Tricare Behavioral Health Line
  - Vet Centers

- **Deployed Support Services**
  - Unit Medical (BAS, RAS, etc.)
  - Unit Chaplain
  - Operational Stress Control and Readiness (OSCAR)
  - MLG Surgical Company Forward
  - FOB Emergency Services

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Mandatory  Optional  Local Initiative
# NCO Suicide Prevention Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drama</th>
<th>Evocative 30 minute movie lead-off</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Video Clips</td>
<td>11 documentary (survivors/Marines) and movie clip compilations of to highlight training points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>Sergeant instructors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Instructor uses personal experience to train</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive</td>
<td>Small group discussions (2) and full group discussions (5) to engage audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
<td>True to NCO culture and language -- honest and realistic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Very real. Not sugar coated!”

“We’re finally out of the ’80s!”
Historic Trends and Program Efficacy

MCO 6200.4A required 1-hour suicide awareness training for all Marines in 1997

Average suicide rate dropped 26% comparing 4 years pre and post implementation

Average suicide rate for 9 years prior to 1997 is significantly higher than the average rate through 2008: T-test: P<.05
No stone unturned

- **Marine Corps**
  - “Never in my 30 years in uniform have I seen so many Generals in one place spending so much time discussing suicide prevention.”
    
    Col Robert Ireland, Program Director for Mental Health Policy, OSD(HA) at USMC Executive Safety Board, Nov 2008.

- **Department of Defense**
  - DoD Task Force on Suicide Prevention
  - Suicide Prevention and Risk Reduction Committee (SPARRC)
    - Training Subcommittee
    - Research/Data Subcommittee
    - Annual Conference Subcommittee
  - Nomenclature Workgroup
  - Inactive Reserve Workgroup

- **Federal Government**
  - Federal Executive Partners
    - HHS Leadership of 13 Federal Agencies/Departments
    - Senior Partners Suicide Prevention Priority Workgroup -- USMC Chairs
    - Action Alliance – public/private partnership with the National Council for Suicide Prevention

- **International**
  - International Association of Suicide Prevention
    - International Task Force on Defense and Police Forces – USMC Chairs