

MASTER DIRECTIVES

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP 12
1ST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING, MARFORPAC
UNIT 37150
FPO AP 96603-7161



GruO 1700.2A
ADJ
NOV 09 1999

GROUP ORDER 1700.2A

From: Commanding Officer
To: Distribution List

Subj: REQUEST MAST

Ref: (a) U.S. Navy Regulations, 1990
(b) Marine Corps Manual
(c) JAGMAN
(d) MCO P1900.16E
(e) MCO 1700.23E
(f) MCO P5354.1C
(g) WgO 1700.4N

Encl: (1) Instructions/Procedures on Preparation and Submission of the Marine Corps Request Mast Application (NAVMC 11296)
(2) Marine Corps Request Mast Application (NAVMC 11296)
(3) Request Mast Log-in Form
(4) Request Mast Chain of Command

1. Purpose. To publish instructions for Marine Aircraft Group 12 personnel desiring to request mast per the provisions of references (a) through (g).

2. Cancellation. GruO 1700.2

3. Summary of Revision. This revision contains significant changes that clarify and streamline Request Mast policy and procedure and should be reviewed in its entirety.

4. Background. The right of Marines to directly communicate grievances to, and seek assistance from, their Commanding Officer is established in Reference (a), (Arts. 0820c and 1151.1) and reference (b), (paragraph 2805) and is exercised through the formal process of Request Mast. Request Mast includes both the right of the Marine to communicate with the commander, normally in person, and the requirement that the commander consider the matter and personally respond to the Marine requesting mast. Request Mast provides a Marine the opportunity to communicate not only with his or her immediate commanding officer, but also with any superior commander

NOV 09 1999

in the chain of command up to and including the Commanding General, 1st MAW. Request Mast also provides commanders with firsthand knowledge of the morale and general welfare of the command. To be effective, Request Mast must have the wholehearted support of those to whom the leadership of Marines is entrusted. Anyone who attempts to deprive a Marine of the right to Request Mast, through either acts of omission or commission, will be subject to punishment under the UCMJ. Request Mast does not preclude the informal process of communications that occurs between seniors and subordinates.

5. Information. For the purpose of Request Mast:

a. "Marine" includes all Active and Reserve Marines who are assigned to 1st MAW units including Iwakuni and ASEK, including those attached or serving on temporary additional duty. Uniformed members of other services assigned or attached to Marine Corps commands may also exercise the rights of Request Mast.

b. "Commander" includes the Marine's immediate commanding officer (officer with NJP authority) and every commanding officer in the chain of command up to and including the Commanding General 1st MAW. It also includes inspector-instructors and officers-in-charge (provided the OIC is vested with NJP authority).

c. "Commanding General" refers to a Commanding General (CG) exercising general court-martial convening authority. It also includes an officer serving in an acting capacity. The immediate CG is normally the officer exercising general court-martial authority (GCMA) over the Marine.

d. "Communicate" includes the opportunity to appear personally before a commanding officer or the right to either correspond with that officer in writing or speak with the officer by telephone.

6. Policy

a. Request Mast is the principal means for a Marine to formally communicate a grievance to, or seek assistance from, his or her commander. The process does not include those outside the official chain of command, such as subordinate officers or SNCOs/NCOs.

b. All Marines must understand that Request Mast issues may not be resolved to his or her satisfaction, but they will be afforded the opportunity to address the issue with their Commanding Officer.

c. Request Mast is not intended to be used for the purpose of harassment, avoiding duty, or intentionally interfering with the commander's ability to carry out the functions and mission of the command.

d. A commander may deny a Request Mast application if there is another specific avenue of redress available to the Marine. Commanders should carefully evaluate each Request Mast to determine if other peripheral issues should be addressed. Accordingly, commanders may wish to hear the Marine's presentation of matters before making a decision to deny. The Commanding Officer shall explain to the Marine why the Request Mast application was denied and, if appropriate, what procedure must be followed to resolve the issue. The authority to deny a Request Mast includes authority to refuse to further process the Request Mast. Whenever a commander denies a Request Mast under this authority, he or she shall, within a reasonable time, forward a report of such action and the basis thereof, via the chain of command, to CG 1st MAW (Wing Inspector). The following are some examples to which other avenues of redress apply:

(1) The Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) provides for the protection of the rights of a Marine at every stage of disciplinary action from investigation through final review or appeal. Therefore, a commander may deny a Request Mast that has as its subject such disciplinary action whether contemplated, pending, in progress, or final. Request Mast is not intended to be used as a means of collateral attack against the proceedings, punishment, or findings and sentence resulting from disciplinary action brought under the UCMJ.

(2) Reference (d), chapters 4 and 6, contains provisions for the protection of rights of Marines being processed for involuntary administrative separation. Accordingly, commanders may deny a Request Mast that has as its subject such involuntary administrative discharge proceedings whether contemplated, pending, in progress, or final.

(3) Chapter III of reference (c) contains guidance for the preparation, submission, and processing of complaints under Article 138, UCMJ, and Article 1150 of reference (a).

NOV 09 1999

Commanders may deny a Request Mast if its subject is an ongoing Article 138 or 1150 investigation. The Staff Judge Advocate 1st MAW should be consulted in such instances.

e. Request Mast is the preferred method for submitting Equal Opportunity formal complaints of discrimination, to include Sexual Harassment. Request Mast may also be used to address other complaints such as hazing.

f. A Marine does not have to disclose the subject of the Request Mast to anyone in the chain of command except to the commander with whom the Marine is Requesting Mast.

g. When a Marine submits a Request Mast to a commander in the chain of command, who is not at the same base or immediate geographic location (i.e., CG 1st MAW), the Request Mast shall be expeditiously forwarded by the senior commander in the immediate area. The Request Mast shall then be addressed with the Marine in person, by telephone or in writing, as deemed appropriate.

h. When the operational commitments of a Marine's command, whether for training or actual employment, would be unreasonably interfered with by adherence to the procedures set forth in reference (e) and this Order, the right of the Marine to apply for a Request Mast to a commander above the level of the immediate commanding officer may be suspended by CG 1st MAW for the duration of the commitment. The authority to suspend shall be invoked sparingly and then only to the extent required to ensure the accomplishment of the command's mission. The suspension may and should be lifted in whole or in part at any deployments away from the base or station where the command's garrison headquarters is located. Any such suspension and the reasons therefore shall be made known to all Marines whose rights may be affected.

i. Although a Marine may be granted the privilege of forwarding an application for Request Mast with higher commanders, such as CG III MEF, Commander, Marine Forces Pacific (COMMARFORPAC), the Commandant of the Marine Corps or the Secretary of the Navy, there is no vested right to Request Mast with such higher commander.

(1) Applications must be submitted in writing.

(2) Any CG in the chain of command between the

Marine's immediate CG and the Commandant of the Marine Corps may establish such policies and procedures as they desire for processing Request Masts addressed to them, including that such requests may be returned without action.

(3) Applications for Request Mast with the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Secretary of the Navy addressed via the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Commander, Marine Forces Pacific or Commander, III Marine Expeditionary Force will only be considered if specifically recommended by the CG 1st MAW. Absent such specific recommendation, the application shall not be forwarded. Any application received at Headquarters, United States Marine Corps that does not include a recommendation for consideration and any application not forwarded via the chain of command will be returned without action. Those addressed to the Secretary of the Navy via the Commandant of the Marine Corps will be forwarded with a recommended response. There is no vested right for a personal audience with either the Commandant of the Marine Corps or the Secretary of the Navy.

(4) Request Mast applications to the Commandant of the Marine Corps will be handled by the Inspector General of the Marine Corps (IGMC).

j. Nothing in this Order is intended to expand or abridge the rights of Marines otherwise guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, Federal Law or applicable Department of Defense, Navy, or other Marine Corps regulations. The exercise of such rights is not governed by the procedures contained in this Order.

k. Any interference with a Marine's right to Request Mast or any attempt of reprisal against a Marine who has requested Mast is prohibited. No Marine may suppress, or attempt to suppress another Marine from initiating, writing, or forwarding a Request Mast up the chain of command. Any violation, attempted violation, or solicitation of another to violate this order by interfering with a Marine's right to Request Mast, subjects involved members to disciplinary action under Article 92 of the UCMJ. This Order derives its authority from reference (g), a lawful general order, and is effective immediately without further implementation.

l. Request Mast will be conducted at the earliest reasonable time and not later than 24 hours after initial submission of the application, whenever practicable.

NOV 09 1999

m. Records, proceedings, and final dispositions of Request Mast cases shall be maintained separate from service records and be properly safeguarded to prevent the information from having a prejudicial effect on the Marine. Request Mast records shall be maintained and retained by the unit Sergeant Major/First Sergeant in a locked file for 2 years from the date final action is taken.

7. Guidance and Procedures for Processing Request Mast Applications. Applications for Request Mast shall be submitted by the Marine, in writing, utilizing the Marine Corps Request Mast Application (NAVMC 11296) contained in enclosure (2) to this Order. Detailed instructions for the completion of the Request Mast application are contained in enclosure (1).

8. Action. Squadron Commanding Officers shall ensure that:

a. A command Request Mast program is established and published to all hands as provided for in enclosure (1) of reference (e).

b. Enclosure (2) is used during Request Mast proceedings.

c. Local procedures are established to ensure that follow-up actions are accomplished in a timely and adequate manner.

d. Statistical information concerning Request Mast by Marines within the command is maintained for two years.

e. Per MCO P5215.1G concerning reduction of directives, this directive serves as the governing request mast Order for members of PSD, MAG-12.


J. F. FLOCK

DISTRIBUTION: A

NOV 09 1999

INSTRUCTIONS/PRODEDURES FOR PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION OF
THE MARINE CORPS REQUEST MAST APPLICATION (NAVMC 11296)

1. Any Marine may Request Mast with any Commanding Officer in his or her chain of command in accordance with this Order. Such a request shall be made in writing and can be made without fear of reprisal or prejudice to their interests.
2. Commanders shall make every effort to provide the Marine with an opportunity to Request Mast in person. If personal appearance is not practical, the commander shall respond in writing to the Request Mast. The commander shall also provide an explanation of why a personal appearance was not practical.
3. Request Mast is not intended to be used for the purpose of harassment, avoiding duty, or intentionally interfering with the commander's ability to carry out the functions and mission of his command.
4. Request Mast is the preferred means for filing Equal Opportunity formal complaints of discrimination, sexual harassment and hazing.
5. Request Mast issues may not be resolved to the Marine's satisfaction, but the Marine shall be afforded the opportunity to address the issue with the Commanding Officer.
6. Applications from enlisted Marines shall be submitted to the unit Sergeant Major, Senior Enlisted Marine, or Administrative Chief.
7. Applications from officers shall be submitted to the unit Executive Officer or Adjutant.
8. Once the Marine has indicated his or her desire to Request Mast, Officers, SNCOs and NCOs subordinate to the unit Commanding Officer shall make no effort to delay the Request Mast process in order to solve the problem themselves, but rather focus on making the Marine available to the commander.
9. Each intermediate commander shall attempt to resolve the Marine's Request Mast issue, if revealed, without delay. If the issue has not been addressed to the Marine's satisfaction, the intermediate commander shall forward the application via the chain

ENCLOSURE (1)

of command without delay to the commander to whom it is addressed. In general, there should be no more than 1 working day delay at any level of command. Explanations for delay must be provided to the Marine and forwarded via chain of command.

10. Request Mast applications shall be processed and resolved without delay. Commanders shall hear emergency cases as soon as initially submitted. For purposes of example, to determine whether a Request Mast is an emergency case, among other things, consider (1) whether the Marine is subject to an ongoing hardship (e.g., delay in receiving pay); (2) the severity of hardship, if any; and (3) if the issue will remain unresolved upon a certain date, time, or expected event in the immediate future (e.g., request for leave to attend a relative's funeral being denied).

11. Commanders shall forward to the next higher commander those Request Masts deemed to be legitimate grievances or requests for assistance, which are beyond the commander's authority to resolve.

12. The Marine shall make a written statement on the Request Mast or attached sheet indicating that he or she has had the opportunity to communicate directly with the commanding officer and has been informed of any actions to be taken by the commander conducting the Request Mast.

13. If a Request Mast addressed to a higher commander is resolved at a lower level, the Marine shall make a written statement on the Request Mast or attached sheet. This statement will indicate that he or she is satisfied with the action taken at the lower level and has chosen to voluntarily withdraw the Request Mast. The Marine and a witness shall jointly sign this statement.

14. Marines confined in correctional facilities have the right to Request Mast. A Request Mast marked "To be opened by the Commanding Officer/Commanding General only" shall not be opened by correctional facilities personnel.

15. If the Marine's Request Mast is with the Commanding General of 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, the following protocol applies:

a. The Marine shall prepare a complete written statement covering the reasons for Requesting Mast. Supporting documents should be attached to the statement. The statement may also include a list of witnesses with a summary of the expected testimony of each

ENCLOSURE (1)

witness. The statement must include a summary of responsive action taken by each commander in the chain of command with whom the Marine has communicated his or her problem.

b. Each intermediate commander, to whom the Marine reveals the Request Mast subject, shall provide a written statement as to his or her understanding of the Request Mast subject and his or her responsive action. Each statement shall be added to the Request Mast prior to the Marine communicating the Request Mast subject to the next commander.

c. If the Marine has not revealed the subject of the Request Mast to the other commanders in the chain of command, the Marine must include an explanatory statement. The Marine may place the Request Mast in an envelope marked "To be opened by the Commanding General only."

d. When establishing Internal Request Mast procedures, commanding generals may authorize a Request Mast to be reviewed by the local command inspector. In these situations the following considerations apply:

(1) A command inspector may not respond to nor deny a Request Mast on behalf of the Commanding General, but may make appropriate recommendations pertaining to the Request Mast to the Commanding General.

(2) Any lawful communication made to a command inspector shall also constitute a protected disclosure under the Military Whistleblower Protection Act. Therefore, in addition to the protection afforded to a Marine for exercising his other right to Request Mast under U.S. Navy Regulations and this order, further protection is afforded to the Marine under 10 U.S.C. Section 1034, Military Whistleblower Protection Act as implemented by SECNAVINST 5370.7, Military Whistleblower Protection.

16. Request Mast with the Inspector General of the Marine Corps and Commanding General's Inspector shall be handled in accordance with references (e) and (g).

ENCLOSURE (1)

NOV 09 1999

MARINE CORPS REQUEST MAST APPLICATION

NAVMC 11296 (Rev. 6-97)

3N: 0000-00-888-0350 U/I: EA

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

Authority: Title 5, U. S. Code 301; Title 10, USC Section 5013

Principal Purpose: Formal filing of complaints/problems to command personnel.

Routine Uses: To provide a record to facilitate personnel management actions and decisions; to serve as a data source for complaint/problem information and resolution efforts.

Disclosure: Disclosure is voluntary. Failure to complete the requested items could result in delayed command action and/or an inaccurate/incomplete analysis of the complaint/problem.

PART I - TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT

1. NAME:		2. RANK:	3. SSN:
4. UNIT:		5. RACE/ETHNIC GROUP:	
6. GENDER:		7. DATE:	

8a. I desire to Request Mast with: (Provide the name and billet of the Commanding Officer with whom you desire to communicate.):

8b. NATURE OF COMPLAINT/PROBLEM: (Give in as much detail as possible the basis of your complaint; describe the incident(s)/behavior(s) and date(s) of the occurrence(s); the names of the individuals involved, witnesses and to whom it may have been previously reported. Include any other information relevant to your complaint/problem. Attach additional sheets, as needed).

8c. REQUESTED REMEDY/OUTCOME: (Clearly state what assistance or complaint resolution you are seeking from the commanding officer named in 8a above.)

9. AFFIDAVIT

I, _____, have read this statement which begins in Block 8b on this page (page 1) and ends on page _____. I fully understand the statement made by me and certify the statement is true. I have initialed all corrections. I make this formal statement without threat of punishment and without coercion, unlawful influence, or unlawful inducement.

(SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT/DATE)

PART II: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE OFFICER CONDUCTING REQUEST MAST

10. DISPOSITION: (Provide a detailed explanation of actions taken or attempted to resolve the complaint/problem, to include any other referrals. If an inquiry/investigation was initiated as a result of this complaint, provide the type conducted and the results. Attach additional sheets as necessary.)

COMMANDING OFFICER SIGNATURE/DATE

PART III: APPLICANT'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF REQUEST MAST

(Applicant should initial/complete the appropriate statement(s))

_____ I have had the opportunity to communicate directly with my Commanding Officer named in Block 8a and understand the disposition or probable disposition of my problem/complaint.

_____ I have had the opportunity to communicate directly with _____ (name and billet of commanding officer subordinate to officer named in Block 8a), understand the disposition or probable disposition of my problem/complaint, and voluntarily withdraw this Request Mast.

_____ I have not had the opportunity to communicate directly with my Commanding Officer named in Block 8a.

_____ I have had the opportunity to communicate directly with my Commanding Officer named in Block 8a but have not been informed of the disposition or probable disposition of my problem/complaint.

WITNESS' SIGNATURE/DATE

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE/DATE

REQUEST MAST LOG-IN FORM (CY _____)

UNIT:

MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP 12, 1ST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING

CUSTODIAN: SERGEANT MAJOR/FIRST SERGEANT

CHRONOLOGICAL RECORD OF MARINES WHO HAVE REQUESTED MAST IN THIS UNIT, THIS YEAR.

NO.	NAME (LAST, FIRST MI)	SSN	DATE INIT/COMP	REFERRED TO
1.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____	_____	_____
11.	_____	_____	_____	_____
12.	_____	_____	_____	_____
13.	_____	_____	_____	_____
14.	_____	_____	_____	_____

ENCLOSURE (3)

GruO 1700.2A
NOV 09 1999

REQUEST MAST CHAIN OF COMMAND

SECRETARY OF
THE NAVY

COMMANDANT
OF THE
MARINE CORPS

COMMANDER
MARINE
FORCES
PACIFIC

COMMANDING GENERAL
III MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

COMMANDING GENERAL
1ST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING

COMMANDING OFFICER
MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP 12

UNIT COMMANDER (SQUADRON/PSD)

ENCLOSURE (4)