

Policy Statement on Combat and Operational Stress Control



5th ANGLICO must have the ability to train and sustain a combat ready, resilient force capable of carrying out all of our assigned missions. Understanding stress reactions, and proactively addressing stressors, increases mission readiness, preserves the force, and promotes the long-term health of our Marines and Sailors. All Marines and Sailors must find ways to address it for themselves, their subordinates, their family, and their unit to promote psychological resilience.

The five Core Leader Functions of COSC promote principles of wellness, prevention, early intervention, identification, reintegration, and stigma reduction. The following five Core Leader Functions will form the foundation for this command's COSC program.

a. **Strengthen.** Leaders will use their existing tools for training and developing Marines to mentally, physically, spiritually, and socially strengthen their ability to fight the negative effects of combat or operational stress. This includes tough training already being conducted to develop technical proficiency and increase unit cohesion. Families must be included when developing unit cohesion and will be offered participation in COSC events to strengthen their ability to deal with the stressors of military life, especially considering the added stressor of being in a foreign country. Additionally, leaders can build strength through their own conduct and example by setting high standards, demanding excellence, and giving clear information and guidance.

b. **Mitigate.** Many stressors can be mitigated through proper planning. This gives Marines and Sailors a greater reserve to address stressors that cannot be avoided. Leaders should be aware of the effects of stress on each Marine and Sailor and help them develop their own coping strategies to empower decision making, effective planning and resilience. Strong coping strategies will help Marines and Sailors prepare for and overcome future stressors.

c. **Identify.** Promptly identifying and addressing signs of stress in their Marines and Sailors is a critical requirement of all leaders. Knowing and using the Stress Continuum and Stress Decision Flowchart articulated in MCTP 3-30E is an important aspect of good small unit leadership and mastering combat skills.

d. **Treat.** Treatment is about taking action. It begins with self-care and peer support and may range from addressing personal issues and sharing lessons learned, to referring the Marine or Sailor for medical intervention. Leaders must remain involved in the Marine or Sailor's ongoing requirements throughout the treatment cycle. This includes closely monitoring those transitioning out of the military.

e. **Reintegrate.** Regardless of the level of treatment, each Marine or Sailor will be helped during the treatment process and received back into the unit once recovered. This may require further mentorship and understanding of limitations imposed by their recovery. The expectation is that Marines and Sailors suffering from stress issues can, and will, continue to be effective members of the unit, and I expect all commanders and leaders to set up these Marines and Sailors for the greatest chance of success.

The phone numbers for COSC services are:

- (1) Marine Corps Family Team Building (098) 969-2104
- (2) Behavioral Health (098) 970-2915
- (3) 5th ANGLICO Unit Representative: Capt Coleman (315) 623-8711 or (090-6015-5483)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. R. Ashton'.

M. R. ASHTON
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps
Commanding Officer
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