



COMMANDING OFFICER'S HAZING POLICY



Thunder Chickens, our mission is to support the MAGTF Commander by providing assault support transport of combat troops, supplies, and equipment, day or night, under all weather conditions during expeditionary, joint, or combined operations. **This mission demands we train and fight as one cohesive unit and maximize the contributions of every squadron Marine. The success of the "Thunder Chicken Team" depends upon strict adherence to our Corps Values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment in an environment free of hazing.**

Hazing: Any conduct whereby a military member or members, regardless of Service or rank, without proper authority causes another military member or members, regardless of Service or rank, to suffer or be exposed to any activity which is cruel, abusive, humiliating, oppressive, demeaning, or harmful. Soliciting or coercing another to perpetrate any such activity is also considered hazing. Hazing need not involve physical contact among or between military members; it can be verbal or psychological in nature. Actual or implied consent to acts of hazing does not eliminate culpability of the perpetrator.

Examples of Hazing:

- Threatening or offering violence or bodily harm.
- Physically striking to inflict pain; piercing another's skin in any manner.
- Verbally berating another; playing abusive or ridiculous tricks.
- Encouraging others to excessively consume alcohol.
- Encouraging others to engage in illegal, harmful or dangerous acts.
- Requiring excessive physical exercise beyond what is required.
- Striking; branding; taping; tattooing; shaving; greasing; or pinning

Hazing directly counters our institution's core values and is prejudicial to unit good order and discipline. An intentional, willful, and demeaning act of hazing exploits individual Marines and Sailors, creates an environment of fear and reprisal, and destroys the confidence and trust that is vital to VMM-263's unit cohesion, mission readiness, and most importantly combat effectiveness.

Our Thunder Chicken tradition and ethos demand strict adherence to the highest professional standards. Hazing violates our sacred obligation to "take care of our own." There are no "rites of passage" or "initiations" into this unit. The newest members of this command will be afforded the respect and dignity bestowed to all who earned the title Marine or Sailor. MOS qualifications, promotions, and advancements will be based on the Marine's or Sailor's performance. There is nothing additional to "earn" or "prove" to the command. I will not tolerate hazing in any form and will deal swiftly and appropriately with those who conduct, promote, condone, or ignore such behavior. Any substantiated incident of hazing will result in administrative and/or punitive proceedings under the UCMJ.

A squadron free from hazing promotes teamwork, mission accomplishment, esprit de corps, and operational excellence. The "Thunder Chickens" are proud of our legacy, devoted to our fellow Marines and Sailors, and committed to upholding the highest professional and personal standards of our Country and Corps.

Lieutenant Colonel Sean F. Rafferty
Commanding Officer, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 263

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