
Religious Lay Leaders Handbook



U.S. Marine Corps

PCN 144 000077 00

MCCDC (C 42)

31 MAY 2000

ERRATA

to

MCRP 6-12B

Religious Lay Leaders Handbook

1. Please insert the attached Appendix I. Due to an unfortunate error, this appendix was omitted.

144 000077 80

To Our Readers

Changes: Readers of this publication are encouraged to submit suggestions and changes that will improve it. Recommendations may be sent directly to Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command, Doctrine Division (C 42), 3300 Russell Road, Suite 318A, Quantico, VA 22134-5021 or by fax to 703-784-2917 (DSN 278-2917) or by E-mail to **morgannc@mccdc.usmc.mil**. Recommendations should include the following information:

- Location of change
 - Publication number and title
 - Current page number
 - Paragraph number (if applicable)
 - Line number
 - Figure or table number (if applicable)
- Nature of change
 - Add, delete
 - Proposed new text, preferably double-spaced and typewritten
- Justification and/or source of change

Additional copies: A printed copy of this publication may be obtained from Marine Corps Logistics Base, Albany, GA 31704-5001, by following the instructions in MCBul 5600, *Marine Corps Doctrinal Publications Status*. An electronic copy may be obtained from the Doctrine Division, MCCDC, world wide web home page which is found at the following universal reference locator: **<http://www.doctrine.quantico.usmc.mil>**.

Unless otherwise stated, whenever the masculine or feminine gender is used, both men and women are included.

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
Headquarters United States Marine Corps
Washington, D.C. 20380-1775

28 February 2000

FOREWORD

Marine Corps Reference Publication (MCRP) 6-12B, *Religious Lay Leaders Handbook*, provides guidance, techniques, and procedures for the Marine Corps' religious lay leader program.

MCRP 6-12B sets forth command responsibilities and standards for religious lay leaders in the Marine Corps. It describes the administration and procedures for religious lay leaders in the conduct of their ministry. This publication provides the authoritative basis for how religious lay leaders are incorporated into command religious programs to assist in the provision of religious ministry support for the free exercise of religion for Marines and Sailors. MCRP 6-12B describes the role, function, and responsibilities of religious lay leaders in accordance with the principles of religious ministry support defined in Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 6-12, *Religious Ministry Support in the U. S. Marine Corps*.

Reviewed and approved this date.

BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

J. E. RHODES
Lieutenant General, U. S. Marine Corps
Commanding General
Marine Corps Combat Development Command

DISTRIBUTION: 144 000077 00

PREFACE

A Guide for Religious Worship and Character Development in a U.S. Ship Without a Chaplain (the first guidance published for religious lay leaders) was issued by Admiral Arthur W. Radford, Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet, on 1 July 1952. Prepared by the Pacific Fleet Chaplain George A. Rosso's Office, it was a brief document with only three pages of information. It noted that commanding officers on ships without chaplains could select a volunteer leader to lead worship. For Protestants the service had to be "commensurate with good taste and the spiritual needs of all worshippers."

—*from Navy Lay Leader Program, 1949-1958*

Since the days of World War II, sea services men and women have willingly filled the gap for their faith groups as lay leaders when chaplains were not available to meet the needs of their fellow Marines and shipmates. At the close of that war, there were only a dozen or so faith groups officially represented in the military. What a difference that was from over two hundred faith groups recognized today by our Armed Forces Chaplains Board. The exponential growth of religious groups in America bears witness to the expanding role that faith plays in the lives of our men and women.

As we sail into the uncharted waters of the next millennium, faith and hope will remain crucial elements in the personal readiness of our forces. The religious lay leader program is but another demonstration of the ongoing commitment and partnership of the Chaplain Corps and the Marine Corps in meeting the ever-changing religious ministry support requirements of our Marines and Sailors.

It is my hope that the *Religious Lay Leaders Handbook* will assist commanders, chaplains, and lay leaders as they provide for the free exercise of religion for their fellow Marines and Sailors. By your

intentional responsible leadership, we will safeguard for all this most basic American freedom.

May God bless you in your efforts to preserve and encourage religious liberty.

A. BYRON HOLDERBY, Jr.
Rear Admiral, Chaplain Corps,
United States Navy Chief of Chaplains

Religious Lay Leaders Handbook

Table of Contents

Chapter 1	Fundamentals	
1001	Introduction	1-1
1002	Definitions	1-1
1003	Background	1-2
1004	Requirement for Accommodation	1-3
1005	Need	1-4
1006	Responsibility	1-4
Chapter 2	Functions	
2001	Lay Leader Program	2-1
2002	Role and Character	2-3
2003	Accountability	2-4
2004	Duties	2-5
2005	Tasks and Standards	2-6
2006	Faith Group Requirements	2-8
Chapter 3	Appointment	
3001	Command Requirements	3-1
3002	Candidate Selection	3-2
3003	Ecclesiastical or Faith Group Approval	3-4
3004	Command Recommendation	3-6
3005	Training Requirement	3-7
3006	Command Chaplain Recommendation	3-7
3007	Command Appointment	3-7
3008	Recognition and Certification Renewal	3-8

MCRP 6-12B

Chapter 4 Training Program

4001	Responsibility	4-1
4002	Requirements	4-2
4003	Curricula	4-2
4004	Command Support	4-3
4005	Faith Group Training Requirements	4-4
4006	Documentation	4-4
4007	Interim Training	4-5

Chapter 5 Field and Shipboard Devotional Services

5001	Purpose	5-1
5002	Authority	5-1
5003	Planning	5-2
5004	Essential Elements of Devotional Services	5-4
5005	Faith Group-Specific Requirements and Services	5-14
5006	Resources	5-16
5007	Support	5-19
5008	Coordination	5-20
5009	Times and Locations	5-20
5010	Announcements and Publicity	5-21
5011	Limits	5-22
5012	Records and Reports	5-24

Appendices

A	Activity Report and Key	A-1
B	Information Sheet and Chaplain's Interview Form	B-1
C	Faith Group Letter and Information/Verification Form	C-1

Religious Lay Leaders Handbook

D	Command Recommendation	D-1
E	Command Chaplain Recommendation	E-1
F	Appointment Letter	F-1
G	Training Certificate of Completion	G-1
H	Planning Checklist	H-1
I	Field Memorial Service	I-1
J	Glossary	J-1
K	References and Related Publications	K-1

Chapter 1

Fundamentals

1001. Introduction

Religious lay leaders of various faith groups promote opportunities for worship, provide field devotional services, and offer prayers in the absence of a chaplain or clergy of a faith group. When empowered by a faith group and authorized by the command, religious lay leaders may also provide specific sacraments or ordinances and/or lead faith group services when a chaplain or ordained clergy of that faith group is not available. The religious lay leader's specific faith group provides the primary direction and guidance for specific faith group worship and religious practices and requirements. Chaplains and Religious Program Specialists (RPs) supervise religious lay leaders and coordinate direct support.

1002. Definitions

Religious lay leader is defined as a command member appointed in writing by the commander to provide identified faith group requirements under the direct supervision of a chaplain. The role and function of religious lay leaders are delineated by this publication.

Command chaplain is the senior chaplain assigned to a command, or the chaplain that has been officially tasked by higher headquarters with the responsibility of providing religious ministry support to a unit without an assigned chaplain.