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Subj: FISCAL YEAR 2025 INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE MARINE CORPS
INSPECTION TRENDS, OBSERVATIONS, AND SUPERIOR PRACTICES

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1. This document announces key findings from Fiscal Year 2025 Inspector General of the Marine Corps (IGMC) inspections, highlights both positive and negative trends observed, and disseminates superior practices identified across commands. These insights, gleaned from inspections and focus groups, aim to inform leadership, reinforce continual improvement efforts, and enhance overall institutional effectiveness. Ultimately, a shared understanding of common strengths and weaknesses, enables leadership to collectively work towards maintaining the highest standards of performance and readiness throughout the total force.

2. Top Three Most Effective Functional Areas

a. 1040 Career Planning. Programs thrive by prioritizing ongoing training for staff, actively building relationships through personal engagement, ensuring clear and timely communication with everyone involved, delivering efficient and high-quality service in day-to-day operations, and fostering a collaborative team environment with strong leadership oversight. IGMC inspection results in this functional area reinforce the service's continued success relative to retention objectives.

b. 1650 Military Awards. Programs excel due to strong leadership empowering administrators, streamlined processes for timely and accurate processing, strict adherence to regulations ensuring integrity, a commitment from leadership and staff to continual improvement, and collaborative teamwork within commands. These elements combine to effectively recognize deserving personnel, even when facing external challenges.

c. 1700.23 Request Mast. Programs' effectiveness stem from readily available and transparent information; ensuring personnel understand their rights and the established processes. Efficient and timely request handling is achieved through robust management practices that include consistent processes, proactive communication, and effective electronic recordkeeping. These elements combine to create a well-functioning and readily accessible program across the force.

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3. Top Three Least Effective Functional Areas

a. 5300.17 Substance Assessment and Counseling. Programs commonly suffer from a lack of command oversight, resulting in insufficient leadership engagement and inadequate support for key personnel. This leads to critical failures such as missing or unsigned appointment letters, failure to meet mandated testing requirements and timelines, insufficient documentation and tracking systems, improper testing procedures, overload of Substance Abuse Control Officers, failures in timely referrals, and process deficiencies in notification, tracking, and follow-up. These shortcomings collectively compromise program sustainability, compliance, and the health and readiness of personnel.

b. 1700.31 Transition Readiness. Programs commonly struggle with adherence to mandated timelines for initial and pre-separation counseling, as well as transition readiness seminars and commander's verification. These programs often exhibit significant gaps in processes, inadequate tracking systems to monitor progress, limited program oversight due to lack of leadership involvement, and insufficient staff support compounded by limited turnover and experience managing this functional area. The resulting lack of program visibility and inconsistent notification hinders leadership's ability to proactively support transitioning service members, ultimately undermining their successful transition from uniformed service to the next phase of their careers.

c. 6100 Body Composition and Military Appearance. Programs frequently demonstrate a lack of regulatory adherence, leading to problems such as improper assignment and removal of Marines, inconsistent weigh-ins and remedial conditioning program implementation, and inadequate documentation. These programs often suffer from a lack of structured workflows, improper measurement techniques, insufficient knowledge of requirements and training, and administrative oversights that include delayed paperwork routing and a lack of enforcement mechanisms for attendance. These deficiencies, exacerbated by continuity issues and personnel gaps, compromise program integrity and potentially impact Marine health, readiness, and appearance.

4. Focus Groups. Reflections revealed that while personnel generally express pride and dedication, key trends impact their quality of life, workforce dynamics, and mission effectiveness. These include geographic variances in quality-of-life (QoL) factors like childcare and housing costs, civilian workforce concerns regarding hiring, the approval of travel to execute performance objectives and training, upward mobility, inconsistent approval of telework, inconsistencies in onboarding processes, and a desire among junior Marines for more mentorship. Best practices identified to mitigate the impact of these challenges include targeted QoL assessments, publishing comprehensive civilian workforce policy, standardized onboarding procedures, formalized mentorship programs, leadership focus on communication/messaging, and implementation of proactive measures to address negative perceptions within commands.

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5. Superior Practices (Inspections Platforms and Modernization). The ingenuity of 2d Marine Logistics Group (MLG) and 3d Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW) is evident in their independently developed Power BI-powered inspection platforms, resulting in demonstrably superior inspection practices. Each platform innovatively leverages SharePoint to streamline inspection processes, unlock critical data insights, and enable a proactive approach to enhance unit readiness. These platforms modernize inspection paradigms and provide commanders with unprecedented visibility to support data-driven decision-making. The commitment to innovation within 2d MLG and 3d MAW significantly enhances efficiency and effectiveness and provides a model worthy of replication across the force. These initiatives align with service level efforts to modernize conduct of inspections which will include transitioning to a web-based inspections platform in Fiscal Year 2026.

6. The point of contact for this document is Colonel Jerry A. Godfrey, Director of Inspections, at (703) 614-0815 and jerry.godfrey@usmc.mil.


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