



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
3000 MARINE CORPS PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20350-3000

IN REPLY REFER TO  
5730  
OLA  
9 Sep 16

The Honorable Debbie Dingell  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Dingell:

Thank you for your letter of June 30, 2016, to the Commandant of the Marine Corps, concerning Private Raheel Siddiqui, a Marine Recruit who died while attending recruit training at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, South Carolina. I am responding for General Neller.

I can understand your continuing concern on behalf of Recruit Siddiqui and his family and being troubled by the press report regarding the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, South Carolina. You ask for answers to several questions with the understanding that the formal investigations into the events involving the 15 drill instructors are undergoing final review. I am providing answers to your question with the most current information available.

1. Have specific charges been brought against these 15 drill instructors? If so, please provide a detailed accounting of each charge. If not, please explain why the allegations against these 15 individuals have not resulted in formal charges.

**All investigations into the events involving these Marines have been completed and are undergoing final review. The Commanding General, Training and Education Command has forwarded the investigations to prosecutors for review and the drafting of charges as warranted by the evidence.**

2. It is your understanding that a drill instructor had access to Marine Corps recruits while he was the subject of an investigation. You ask what are the allegations against the drill instructor and how was he permitted to continue working with recruits while under investigation?

**The investigations reflect that the drill instructor was improperly assigned for duty with Recruit Siddiqui's platoon, as he remained under investigation for conduct during a previous training cycle.**

3. You ask what new policies or corrective action has the Marine Corps implemented following this incident to ensure that Marines who are under investigation do not maintain contact with recruits?

**The Commanding General, Training and Education Command has directed that drill instructors or other personnel who are the subject of allegations of recruit abuse, hazing, or maltreatment will be immediately suspended from duties that could bring them into contact with recruits.**

4. You ask about the importance of recruiting a military that reflects the diversity of our Nation, and ensures recruits receive effective training so they are prepared to serve our country in combat. You mention a deeply disturbing report in the Wall Street Journal of a drill instructor putting a Muslim recruit in a clothes dryer. You ask how do we ensure all recruits are treated equally and receive the proper training to be effective at their jobs as Marines without resorting to tough and discriminatory tactics that could put someone's life at risk.

**Equal Opportunity concepts and the principles of nondiscrimination are taught to all Military Occupational Specialty school instructors, and this includes drill instructors. These concepts and principles are reemphasized each year as part of required Marine Corps annual training. Furthermore, it is the duty of all Marine Corps leaders, enlisted and officer alike, to teach these concepts and principles to their subordinates and ensure they are followed in all aspects of training and evaluation.**

5. Do Marine Corps drill instructors receive sensitivity training on how to deal with recruits from minority communities? Please provide a detailed explanation of existing training policies for drill instructors.

**All drill instructors attend a twelve week course at Drill Instructor School (DISC) on Parris Island. Equal Opportunity is a part of the Common Skills Instruction that is taught by the School Director (Marine Major/field grade officer) who emphasizes the importance of understanding and respecting an individual's values. Additionally, all Marines receive this training as part of their required Marine Corps annual training with their commands.**

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6. Following this incident does the Marine Corps plan to change policies and procedures related to training of drill instructors to ensure that hazing and physical abuse does not occur in the future?

**Hazing and physical abuse of recruits is strictly prohibited by multiple existing orders and regulations. All allegations of such offenses are thoroughly investigated, and where substantiated addressed via military justice and/or administrative measures.**

7. You asked what is the maximum penalty for a drill instructor that violates Marine Corps policies related to hazing or physical abuse.

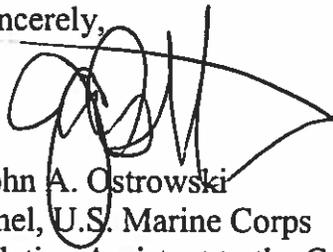
**The maximum punishment for a Marine who commits hazing or physical abuse would depend on whether the evidence supported charges under Articles 92 (Failure to Obey Order), 93 (Maltreatment), and/or 128 (Assault Consummated by Battery) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). Of these three articles, Article 92 carries the most severe maximum punishment: dishonorable discharge, confinement for a period of two years, and total forfeiture of pay and allowances for each specification.**

8. Did any of the 15 drill instructors who are currently under investigation have any contact with Raheel Siddiqui?

**At least six drill instructors whose conduct was reviewed during the investigations had contact with Recruit Siddiqui.**

Again, thank you for your interest in this matter and I hope this information will be of assistance. Please be assured as we investigate this matter, we will keep you apprised of updates as they become available.

Sincerely,



John A. Ostrowski  
Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps  
Deputy Legislative Assistant to the Commandant