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 11 Nov 15

From: Operational Sponsor, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe

 U.S. Marine Corps Forces Africa

To: Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa Individual Mobilization

 Augmentee (IMA) Members

 Marine Corps Forces and Africa associate join members

Subj: MARINE CORPS FORCES EUROPE AND AFRICA INDIVIDUAL MOBILIZATION

 AUGMENTEE WELCOME ABOARD LETTER

Ref: (a) Agreement between the parties of the North Atlantic Treaty

 regarding the Status of their forces of 19 June 1951 (NATO SOFA)

 (b) MCO 5512.4N

 (c) DODEA Enrolment Policy

 (d) TRICARE Overseas Program (TOP) Standard

Encl: (1) Reserve overseas entitlement matrix

1. Welcome aboard to Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa (MFEA). I hope that you will find this assignment to be both professionally rewarding and personally enriching. Your work as an Individual Mobilization Augmentee or an associate join member will provide a critical contribution toward MFEA’s mission accomplishment. In today’s environment of ever-tightening budgets and personnel restraints due to world-wide deployments, a robust Reserve Integration Program is a major part of our success.

2. The welcome aboard package with the above listed enclosures will provide you with general information regarding the Command, overseas entitlements, family medical/dental care, and DOD school enrollment limitations. Unaccompanied orders mean that your family members will **NOT** be command sponsored. The Commander’s intent in disseminating this information is not to discourage Marines issued unaccompanied orders from relocating their family members to their Primary Duty Station (PDS). Rather, the intent is to ensure Marines are provided with all the necessary information needed to make informed decisions which may affect you and your family’s quality of life prior to relocating them to the new PDS. Service members and their family play an important and integral role in the success of the command. Both the member and the family are a part of the Marine Force Europe and Africa family. All Family members are encouraged to participate in command sponsored spouse functions to establish and foster a strong network of support.

3. All Annual Training (AT), Active Duty Operational Support (ADOS) and mobilization orders to Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa are unaccompanied orders. Family members are not funded for OCONUS travel to or from the military member’s duty station or duty site on unaccompanied orders. Family Members will not receive command sponsorship. This limits availability of some services. Listed below are some criteria to consider prior to relocating family members to the Stuttgart, Germany area on unaccompanied mobilization orders:

 a. Non-command sponsored dependents meet the definition of dependents under the NATO Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). As such, they are therefore entitled to most of the privileges that command-sponsored dependents enjoy. Family members may apply for SOFA Identification at the Panzer Kaserne passport office. This identification will be stamped in the family member’s tourist passport. No-Fee Passports are not available to non-command sponsored dependents.

 b. Family members are entitled to shop tax-free at the Commissary or Exchange, given they have not been restricted by Army and Air Force Exchange Services.

 c. Service Members and their family will not be entitled to family base housing.

 d. Family Members will not be entitled to enroll in TriCare Prime

enrollment.

 d. Family Separation Allowance (FSA) is not authorized for Marines whose dependents choose to move with them.

 e. Basic allowance for housing is not authorized if family resides with member overseas. Overseas housing allowance (OHA) will be paid once all requirements are met in order to receive OHA. Only one housing allowance is authorized for members who choose to move their dependents overseas.

 f. Reserve members issued unaccompanied mobilization orders greater than 30 days who choose to relocate their family members from a CONUS Place Entered Active Duty (PLEAD) at their own expense, will be covered under the TRICARE Overseas Program (TOP) Standard. TOP Standard is a fee-for-service option available to eligible unaccompanied Active Duty Service Members living overseas. TOP Standard works like the U.S. TRICARE Standard program, with similar benefits, requirements, and costs. Enrollment is not required; coverage is automatic as long as you are shown as eligible in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) and do not enroll in TOP Prime or TOP Prime Remote. With TOP Standard, you manage your own health care and may generally seek care from any Host Nation (HN) provider without a referral. Certain services, however, including inpatient non-emergency behavioral health care, require prior authorization from your TRICARE Area Office (TAO). The service member is responsible for paying an annual deductible and cost-shares, and you should expect to pay up front for care and to submit a claim for reimbursement. Visit **www.tricare-overseas.com** for a list of Host Nation providers.

 g. School-age children of non-command sponsored Marines who require schooling will be considered for enrollment into the DOD school system on a SPACE AVAILABLE (“Space-A”) basis. The school principal will make the decision to accept Space-A students based on DODEA policy and classroom size. No guarantee will be given to reserve a spot in any DoD school. **MARFORAF/MARFOREUR CANNOT provide advocacy for unaccompanied family members**. If a child is accepted into the school, there is no guarantee that space will be available for follow-on school years. Please contact the respective school for further information. Resources for special-needs children are limited and may not be available for Space-A students.

4. Included in this Welcome-Aboard Package is a variety of information that will answer many of your questions about Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa, the IMA Detachment program, ADOS, and the Stuttgart, Germany area. The information is fairly easy to understand in nature, and designed to familiarize and acquaint you with the command and the required procedures. Another good source of information is the Marine Forces Europe and Africa website, <http://www.marforeur.marines.mil/>

5. The Reserve Liaison Chief, Staff Sergeant Paul Borges and I, stand ready to ensure that you are ready to support the staff section to which you are assigned to. We can be contacted at mike.tsung@usmc.mil, (Comm) +49 703 115 3577 or paul.borges@usmc.mil, (Comm) +49-703-115-3611 if you have further billet or mission-specific questions.

6. Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa has a proud history of supporting Marines around the globe. This is a busy and exciting time, and we look forward to meeting each of you personally and welcoming you aboard.

 M. K. TSUNG

ENDORSEMENT \_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_

 DD MMM YY

I (print rank and name)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, have read and understood this welcome aboard letter.

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 Member Signature