

**MCRP 3-02A (formerly FMFRP 0-1B)**

# **Marine Physical Readiness Training for Combat**



**U.S. Marine Corps**

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MARINE PHYSICAL READINESS TRAINING FOR COMBAT

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UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
Marine Corps Combat Development Command  
Quantico, Virginia 22134-5001

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FLEET MARINE FORCE REFERENCE  
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MARINE PHYSICAL READINESS  
TRAINING FOR COMBAT

1. PURPOSE

Fleet Marine Force Reference Publication (FMFRP) 0-1B, Marine Physical Readiness Training for Combat, is intended for use by all Marines. It provides the information and references necessary to establish and conduct physical conditioning programs to prepare Marines for the physical demands of combat.

2. APPLICABILITY

Although not directive, this handbook is intended for use as a reference by all Marines in developing unit physical readiness training for combat. This FMFRP does not establish policy for the conduct of physical fitness training. Refer to Marine Corps Order 6300.3\_ for applicable Marine Corps policy on physical fitness. It may also be used as a basis for instruction conducted by unit leaders or as a reference for instruction or training.

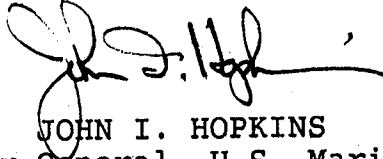
3. RECOMMENDATIONS

To improve this manual, the MAGTF Warfighting Center seeks comments and recommendations from the user. Officers and noncommissioned officers with constructive comments are encouraged to respond. Lack of response will be considered as concurrence. The User Suggestion Form which follows can be detached and forwarded to --

Commanding General  
Marine Corps Combat Development Command (WF 06)  
Quantico, Virginia 22134-5001

#### 4. DISTRIBUTION

Initial distribution of FMFRP 0-1B is shown below. Addressees on this list should ensure that appropriate subordinate organizations are provided copies.



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USER SUGGESTION FORM

From:  
To: Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command  
(WF 06), Quantico, Virginia 22134-5001  
Subj: FMFRP 0-1B, MARINE PHYSICAL READINESS TRAINING FOR COMBAT,  
RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING

1. In accordance with the Promulgation Page to FMFRP 0-1B, which invites individuals to submit suggestions concerning this FMFRP directly to the above addressee, the following unclassified recommendation is forwarded:

Page \_\_\_\_\_ Article/Para No. \_\_\_\_\_ Line No. \_\_\_\_\_ Figure/Table No. \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Change: \_\_\_ Add \_\_\_ Delete \_\_\_ Change \_\_\_ Correct

2. Proposed New Verbatim Text: (Verbatim, double spaced; continue on additional pages as necessary.)

3. Justification/Source: (Need not be double spaced.)

NOTE: Only one recommendation per page.

## PREFACE

This Fleet Marine Force Reference Publication is a revision of U.S. Army publication, Physical Readiness Training, dated 1969, referred to throughout as FM 21-20.

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## Chapter 1

### PHYSICAL READINESS LEADERSHIP

#### Section I. Role of Physical Fitness in Combat

##### 1101. PURPOSE OF PHYSICAL FITNESS TRAINING

Physical fitness training in the Marine Corps has one purpose: to prepare Marines to physically withstand the rigors of combat. All other goals of physical fitness training are subordinate to and must support attainment of this goal. The idea that only infantry or reconnaissance units and their attachments normally face physically demanding combat is wrong. This error must not influence the priority commanders of combat support, combat service support, aviation, and headquarters units give to physical fitness for combat. Physical fitness for combat has a high priority for all Marines. A sound, effective unit program, requiring limited time and material, offers a greater payoff in combat than many more expensive and time-consuming training programs. This handbook describes the concept and provides the ingredients of a program for commanders to use in carrying out one of their most serious responsibilities: ensuring that their Marines are physically ready for combat.

##### 1102. SCOPE OF THE MANUAL

This handbook provides guidance for all leaders, trainers, and planners of physical training programs. It describes unit physical fitness for combat training in the following chapters:

a. **Physical Readiness Leadership.** Chapter 1 provides guidance to leaders in the conduct of physical combat readiness training.

b. **Physical Readiness Training Programs.** Chapter 2 discusses how to structure programs to meet physical readiness goals in a variety of combat training situations.

c. **Physical Conditioning Activities.** Chapter 3 discusses the primary physical conditioning activities which commanders may use to attain readiness for combat goals. Sections in this chapter address foot marches under load, strength-building activities, and activities which build confidence and the aggressive spirit needed in combat.

d. **Combat Water Survival.** As an amphibious force, Marines cannot ignore the importance of combat water survival training. Chapter 4 describes a program for commanders to conduct this training.

e. **Competitive Conditioning Activities.** Chapter 5 describes competitive activities which stress the relationship to combat actions, featuring team-building types of competition.

f. **Evaluation of Performance During Training.** Chapter 6 describes tests which measure individual and unit physical fitness for combat.

g. **The Human Body.** Chapter 7 covers the structure and functioning of the body.

### 1103. **COMMANDER'S ROLE**

Major General Commandant John A. Lejeune in the 1921 edition of Marine Corps Manual expressed our philosophy of leadership. Among other things, General Lejeune stated that "it will be necessary for officers . . . to endeavor to enlist the interest of their men in building up and maintaining their bodies in the finest physical condition." It is significant that the Commandant prefaced these writings in 1921 with the statement that his thoughts were greatly influenced by the experience of World War I. We have never varied as a Corps from this belief that one of a commander's most serious responsibilities is to have Marines physically prepared for combat. Senior commanders and their staffs carry out this role primarily by providing command emphasis, including planning, support, and supervision. Commanders at the battalion/squadron and company/battery level execute a program of physical fitness for combat by close supervision and, most importantly, leadership by example.

### 1104. **HISTORY OF MILITARY PHYSICAL READINESS**

Every war has revealed our military physical deficiencies during the initial periods of mobilization. This realization followed the Civil War and has recurred regularly with each national emergency.

a. Training programs in each war were geared to the physical

need of the era. Success was dependent upon the amount of time available during training to physically prepare Marines for battle conditions. Frequently, casualties in initial engagements were attributed to the inability of our Marines to physically withstand the rigors of combat over rugged terrain and under unfavorable climatic conditions. With adequate preparation, Marines have always handled the test of battle.

b. During World War II, the first physical conditioning doctrine that could be scientifically justified by testing was introduced. As the war progressed, this program was effective in the physical conditioning of millions of Marines for combat.

c. Postwar periods have traditionally been a time of consolidation. Unfortunately, some leaders considered the conditioning phase of training to be a wartime tool. With such a philosophy prevalent between wars, physical readiness was relegated to secondary importance resulting in a serious lowering of combat effectiveness. The initial commitment of Marines in Korea dramatically displayed this failure to recognize the extreme physical demands of warfare. Call-up of large numbers of reserve Marines and pressing them into the war within weeks after call-up mainly caused the loss in effectiveness.

d. Costly lessons learned from our military experiences over a period of years and the course of several wars led to an increasing interest in the physical conditioning of the individual