

### Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: I want to volunteer but I have less than two years of time on station. Am I eligible?**

A: The Marine Corps is looking to select volunteers who are between the ranks of E-1 to E-5 with a variety of Fleet Marine Force (FMF) experience. Yes, Marines can absolutely volunteer for this effort with as little as 30 days in the FMF.

**Q: Are there negative repercussions for voluntarily (drop on request) or involuntarily (injury) leaving the experiment?**

A: No. There are no negative repercussions. Volunteering for the GCE ITF is non-binding and you may withdraw your participation in the research at any time, and without reason. At least one or more of the following will be present and available 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week and/or at all experimental events to ensure your safe removal if you wish to withdraw your participation;

- Officers & SNCOs of the GCE ITF
- Navy Medical Staff
- Research Monitors
- Principle/Associate Investigators

**Q: What will happen to me if I decide to drop on request?**

A: If you decide to revoke your volunteer participation while you are attending a Formal Learning Center (FLC), then you will execute TAD orders back to your Parent Command. If you have already PCA/PCSs to Camp Lejeune, NC and joined the GCE ITF unit you will receive PCA orders to another unit in the Camp Lejeune, NC area. Reserve members will be returned to their assigned unit.

**Q: I don't think that I can meet the requirement to pass a third-class male Physical Fitness Test (PFT) for the 17-26 age group. Can I still participate in the experiment?**

A: That depends on what you are volunteering for. If you are volunteering to participate as a Female Marine in a currently closed MOS (i.e. Tanks, Infantry, Artillery), then you will not be selected. If you are volunteering for an Open MOS position (ie. Admin clerk, Motor Transport operator) you may volunteer, and will perform duties related to the mission of the Provisional Infantry Company.

**Q: What will the experiment entail?**

A: The experiment will involve performing a series of operationally relevant, physically-demanding tasks as a member of a small unit (i.e. a squad, fireteam, vehicle crew). The collective tasks that make-up the experiment are based on each occupational field's training and readiness standards (T&R standards). You will be required to perform these collective tasks repeatedly in a operationally realistic environment under realistic weather conditions.

**Q: How much time will I have to decide whether or not I want to volunteer?**

A: Due to the fast moving nature of this effort and the significant administrative requirements necessary to enroll you in the experiment, you must either volunteer today in person or you may

contact one of the points of contact listed in the brief and in the MARADMIN to volunteer. The deadline to volunteer is Monday, 9 June. All volunteers must give informed consent via the website or faxing/emailing in a hardcopy or signing a hard copy in person during one of the recruitment briefs. Bottom line: If you decide after the recruiting team has departed, please contact us by phone or email immediately.

**Q: What if I am currently pregnant or become pregnant?**

A: The Task Force Commander will make a decision based on the recommendation of the unit's medical officer. It is likely that you will be removed from the experiment but not necessarily the unit. There are no negative repercussions for being removed from the experiment.

**Q: How will participation in the experiment affect my career progression?**

A: The Marine Corps recognizes the importance of individual participation in this high priority effort. Sergeants and above will receive a directed comment in their fitness report (Section I) to explain the time outside of their PMOS. Corporals and below will receive proficiency and conduct marks IAW the IRAM. All Marines will receive an Enlisted Service Record Book (SRB) entry reflecting their time served in this unit. Individuals concerned about their career progression should take into account the many indirect benefits including gaining experience in the ground combat element, gaining additional knowledge and skill-sets, opportunities to demonstrate and develop leadership in a challenging mission environment, and potential increases in physical fitness, marksmanship ability, etc.

**Q: What if I graduate from the MOS school but am physically unable to perform a task during the experiment?**

A: All that anyone can ask of you is to try your best and give it your all. If you find that you cannot physically perform the duties you are assigned, you will not receive any negative repercussions. Keep in mind that the evaluation is centered on small unit/team accomplishments so you will be surrounded by peers that may be able to assist you during the performance of your task.

**Q: If I'm a male, can I volunteer outside of my PMOS?**

A: No. Males will only be able to volunteer to serve within their PMOS. Male Marines who are assigned a closed PMOS will participate within their MOS. Male Marine currently assigned in an open MOS will perform duties related to the mission of a provisional infantry company. Male volunteers will not attend an additional MOS schools (Formal Learning Centers).

**Q: What should I expect to do while at an MOS school?**

A: Marines will receive entry level training on individual and crew tasks pertaining to that MOS. A summary, the MOS prerequisites, requirements and duties are all listed in Marine Corps Order 1200.17A , MOS Manual. Furthermore, the research team can provide you a Program of Instruction (POI) summary table of each MOS school.

**Q: What will I be expected to do while in the GCE ITF?**

A: Depending upon the billet, Marines will perform a variety of tasks associated with missions currently performed in ground combat units. Marines serving in their PMOS billet will perform

the normal tasks associated with the MOS (Objective 1 volunteers only) or Marines will complete tasks related to the mission of a provisional infantry company (Objective 2 volunteers).

**Q: Where should I expect to go to MOS school (Objective 1 volunteers)?**

A: You will be given the opportunity to rank your choices for all closed MOS Schools. Every volunteer will be screened to ensure they meet the pre-requisites of participating in the experiment. First, you will be screened to see if you meet the requirements of the Table of Organization (T/O) line number (i.e. you are the correct rank, gender, etc.). Second, you will be screened to ensure you meet the pre-requisites of the closed MOS schools (for Objective 1 participants only) (i.e. the prerequisites outlined by the Amphibian Assault MOS Manual requires students have color vision, a valid driver's license, Water Survival Intermediate-level qualified, can pass a Male (age 17-26) PFT, and are a minimum of 64 inches tall). Once selected for a closed MOS school, you will receive Temporary Assignment (TAD) orders to the assigned Formal Learning Center (FLC). The FLCs are in a variety of locations: LAR Crewmen (0313) and AAV Crewman (1833) will attend training at Camp Pendleton, CA. All other infantry MOS's (0311, 0331, 0341, 0351, 0352) will attend training at the School of Infantry- East in Camp Geiger, NC. All Tank Crewmen (1812) will attend training at Fort Benning, GA. Artillery Cannoneers (0811) will attend training at Fort Sill, OK. Reserve members will be screened to ensure eligibility to serve on active duty orders. All Reserve members participating in the training must be available for active duty orders between 1 Jul 14 – 1 Sep 15.

**Q: Where should I expect to go during the experiment?**

A: Following graduation from your MOS school, you will execute Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders to Camp Lejeune, NC. Camp Lejeune will be the home station for the GCE ITF. The majority of unit workup training will take place aboard Camp Lejeune. The experiment will occur primarily aboard the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center in Twentynine Palms, CA, with detachments also conducting training aboard Camp Pendleton, CA and the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center in Bridgeport, CA.

**Q: What should I expect for the weather and terrain?**

A: Terrain and typical weather conditions are fully described for each experiment site in the below table. The Table depicts *a range of expected conditions* that you could experience during the experiment.

**Q: Are there heightened concerns about sexual assault in an integrated GCE unit?**

A: There are no greater concerns for sexual assaults within this unit than there are in any other integrated unit across the Marine Corps. The GCE-ITF will have all of the same sexual assault prevention and response (SAPR) resources as every other unit in the Marine Corps.

**Q: Will there be separate hygiene facilities available to males and females both in garrison and in the field?**

A: In garrison, Marines will reside in the barracks at Camp Lejuene and be housed with Marines of the same gender or by themselves (as is typical of NCOs who reside on bases with enough room capacity to grant them their own living spaces). In garrison, male and female Marines will

have their own separate hygiene facilities within their quarters. The facilities at Camp Lejeune, NC accommodate both male and female Marines already. During field training, field latrines, port-a-johns, and field hygiene equipment will be utilized. Training locations will determine the frequency with which Marines will have access to permanently established hygiene facilities with indoor plumbing.

**Q: What kind of information will the research team gather during the experiment?**

A: There are five main agencies/institutions/organizations that you will come in contact with throughout your time as part of the GCE ITF, or during training prior to assignment to the GCE ITF:

1. Marine Corps Operational Test and Evaluation Activity (MCOTEA). The research team from MCOTEA will collect all the information gathered from the collective tasks that you perform as part of a small unit (i.e. a Squad, fireteam, vehicle crewmember) in the execution of your unit's mission. Data elements such as the total time for your small unit to complete a task (i.e. 3 hours to complete a squad road march), rate of movement (i.e. how fast your squad marched (your squad's time/distance), your individual fatigue and workload levels (captured by surveys). Those are just some of the data elements.
2. University of Pittsburg (UPitt). The research team from the UPitt will conduct laboratory and field physical (i.e. strength and agility tests), physiological (i.e. height, weight, body fat, and flexibility tests), and performance screening characteristics (i.e. your class standing at MOS school, injury rates) as well as collect data from current administrative physical fitness tests (i.e. the PFT and CFT).
3. Center of Naval Analysis (CNA). The research team from CNA will collect data from surveys on unit and social cohesion that will be administered periodically throughout the workup and experiment.
4. U.S. Naval Health Research Center (NHRC). The research team from NHRC will administer Naval Unit Behavioral Health Needs Assessment Surveys (NUBHNAS). They will collect survey data on your beliefs and opinions of the unit's leadership, command climate, work environment, unit morale and your coping abilities and stress levels. Furthermore NHRC will collect saliva samples to obtain an objective, qualitative measure of stress level.
5. Training and Education Command. The research team from TECOM will be collecting data on female Marines who attend closed (GCE) MOS schools. Female performance will be evaluated against existing curriculum standards, augmented with survey collected data to capture attitudes and associated reasons when a Marine is no longer part of the research.

**Q: What kinds of risk are involved with participation?**

A: The primary risks involved in participation with the GCE ITF are physical (i.e. injury), emotional risks (i.e. hazing, unauthorized disclosure of PII), and financial risks related to career promotion and retention on Active Duty. The GCE ITF leadership as well as the research staff is making every effort to mitigate the potential risks.

**Q: What are the emotional risks? What is being done to mitigate this risk?**

A: The risk for emotional harm comes from two areas: hazing and unauthorized disclosure of the participants' identity or personally identifiable information. The risk of hazing will exist in the GCE ITF just like any other unit in the Marine Corps.

1. Hazing is unlawful and a prohibited activity punishable under the Uniformed Code of Military Justice. The Commander of the GCE ITF, GCE ITF Officers and Staff Non-commissioned Officers, as well as the Research Team will establish an environment that is free from hazing and take actions as required by Marine Corps Order 1700.28B to prevent hazing.

2. The research team will not provide your name or personally identifiable information (PII) of outside the research project; however, routine orders processing and training evaluations will require that your name and PII be known to the immediate combat arms MOS school staff, Manpower Management and MCOTEA research team.

The research team will protect your data collected as part of the research, to include individual performance (training) scores, and in the case of prepared reports the results will use de-identifiable data reported in the aggregate. The materials associated with this research will be stored in locked cabinets in the office spaces of the Research Team with the exception of medical records. Outpatient medical records will be stored by the GCE ITF medical staff in accordance with the Manual of the Medical Department.

When in transit and off-site, researchers will maintain positive control over the materials and password-protected laptops. Only the principal investigator and the identified associate researchers will have access to the data and project files. The acknowledgement of volunteer status (informed consent form) will be recorded as an individual data point; e.g., numbers volunteering against numbers not volunteering. Data from this research will be retained and may be used in future research. Only your participant's DoD ID number will be used to accurately match the data from the records to scores recorded in the research. All forms used to collect data will be secured by the investigator team following data collection and stored in locked filing cabinets.

Finally, the research team will not divulge your identity or provide research related personal information to individuals or organizations external to the research project. However, the research team cannot provide assurance that your participation in this research will not become public knowledge. The research team cannot prevent actions (such as sharing information and photos via social media) by other participants, their family and friends, or others who may divulge your identity and participation in the study.

There is one exception to consider regarding disclosure. *MCOTEA cannot provide "confidentiality" or "non-attribution," to you as a participant regarding comments involving criminal activity/behavior, or statements that pose a threat to yourself or others. Do NOT discuss or comment on classified or operationally sensitive information during this study.*

**Q: Is it possible to get physically injured? What is being done to mitigate this risk?**

A: All volunteers, regardless of gender, are at risk of physical injury as a result of participation in the GCE ITF. The volunteers participating in the experiment could be subject to musculoskeletal injuries, trauma, or other physical injuries/ailments associated with military training that

incorporates simulated combat movement under load, live fire exercise, and operations in and around heavy machinery (combat/tactical vehicles). To mitigate these risks you can expect to undergo routine physical conditioning prior to the experimentation exercises to prepare you for collective task performance associated with infantry, artillery, armor, and combat engineering disciplines. In addition, you should expect to undergo frequent safety briefs before conducting any experimental activities; and, qualified range safety officers and/or SNCOs will be present at each range event as well as research monitors to ensure safe operation of the range and the fair and safe treatment of all volunteers, regardless of gender, in order to mitigate the risk of injury or mishap to volunteers.

In the event you are injured, either physically or emotionally, trained medical staff composed of a Navy Medical Officer, Medical Service Corps Officer, and Navy Hospital Corpsmen will be present at all events during the GCE ITF to ensure prompt medical treatment is provided to you as needed. In the case of injury, the medical staff supporting the GCE ITF will determine the severity and recovery prognosis for each individual case and will determine whether you continue in the program. Compensation benefits will also be provided to you if the injury results in medical discharge.

**Q: What are the financial risks? What is being done to mitigate these risks?**

A: Financial risks to voluntary participants focus on promotion potential and relocation expenses. Duty proficiency marks will be assigned in accordance with the IRAM and the commanding officer of the GCE ITF will provide due allowance for Marines who will be filling billets inconsistent with their grade and normal MOS skills. M&RA will provide precepts to promotion boards for the Marines participating to ensure their competitive promotion status with their peers and a page 11 entry will be made in the participating Marines' Enlisted Service Record Book to formally document participation in the research. The GCE ITF will be based at Camp Lejeune, NC. Marines (both Active and Reserve) who volunteer that are not currently assigned to the Camp Lejeune area will be issued Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders and relocation expenses will be paid by the Marine Corps in accordance with the Joint Federal Travel Regulations to mitigate the expense of participation to the volunteers. If a participant withdraws from the GCE ITF after execution of PCS orders they will be reassigned to a unit in the Camp Lejeune area to mitigate the cost of immediate reassignment. Reserve Marines will be returned to their assigned unit. Female Marines who attend Closed MOS Schools will be issued Temporary Additional Duty (TAD) orders with travel expenses paid for by Training and Education Command (TECOM). Female Reserve Marines who attend Closed MOS Schools will be issued Temporary Additional Duty (TAD) orders from their assigned unit with travel expenses paid for by Training and Education Command (TECOM). Reservist Marines will be funding through normal Reservist funds.

**Q: If I volunteer, will I definitely be chosen?**

A: No. Selection of volunteers will be based on the needs of the experimental task force and the pre-requisites of the closed MOS schools (Objective 1 volunteers only).

**Q: When and how will I be notified if I have been selected?**

A: You will be identified by name in a MARADMIN released on or about 20 June.

**Q: I am an officer, can I volunteer to participate as a test subject?**

A: No. The experiment is focused on junior Marines and NCOs. Officers may be considered for organizational billets and could receive orders as part of the unit's staff and officer corps through the normal orders process, but will not participate as a test subject.

**Q: I am a SNCO, can I volunteer to participate as a test subject?**

A: No. The experiment is focused on junior Marines and NCOs. SNCOs may be considered for organizational billets and could receive orders as part of the unit's staff and enlisted corps through the normal orders process, but will not participate as a test subject.

**Q: Is there a Point of Contact I can reach about how to volunteer or if I have any additional questions about volunteering for this experiment once the Recruitment / Screening team departs this area?**

A: Yes, You can ask questions any time before or after volunteering to participate. The points of contact from the MCOTEA Research Team are:

Mr. Paul Johnson  
Principle Investigator, MCOTEA  
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Reserve Questions  
Contact the MARFORRES Organizational Mailbox at [MFR\\_sourcing@usmc.mil](mailto:MFR_sourcing@usmc.mil)