

# From The Point To The Point



1st Quarter 2016 Volume 20

**M**ARINE  
**E**XCELLENCE  
**C**ENTER for  
**C**ONTROLLING  
**A**IRCRAFT

The Best ATC Training Facility in the Marine Corps

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Asst ATCFO – 1stLt Elias M. Cabrera  
SNCOIC – MSgt Matthew C. Danque  
Training Chief – GySgt Louie S. Cruz  
Tower Chief – GySgt Joseph M. Derringer  
Radar Chief – SSgt Matthew H. Hartka  
Writer/Editor – Joseph G. Hendrickson

### On the Cover

Four EA-6B Prowlers join a C-130 on 1 Mar 2016 to commemorate the last flight of all four squadrons before the transition to the EA-18.

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Apr 2016

# From The Point

## NKT Completes Latest NATOPS Evaluation

What started out as a typical MCIEAST NATOPS Evaluation, concluded on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March with the best results we have ever had. Since our first evaluation back in 1996 by a team of Navy controllers, this facility has completed 12 evaluations with an average of 10 findings and 32 discrepancies each time. This latest assessment resulted in no findings and 6 discrepancies.

The team was headed by LtCol Hicks and GySgt Allo along with the following evaluators.

Management	LtCol Hicks
Training	GySgt Allo
Radar Branch	GySgt Spradlin
Tower Branch	Mr. Joe Metz
Airspace	Mr. David Plummer
TERPS	GySgt Allo
LOAs	Mr. David Plummer
Flight Planning	GySgt Allo



As part of the closing ceremonies, GySgt Allo was awarded his MOS patches and certificate for qualifications that he had earned during his tours here between 2000-2008.

## Controller of the Quarter

Cpl Mark A. Knudtson has been awarded the Controller of the Quarter for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2016.

During the quarter, Cpl Knudtson was both an instructor and trainee. With 87 hours instructing on Tower Flight Data, Ground Control and Radar Flight Data, while training on Local Control for 109 hours, he finished the quarter with the highest combined total. He is currently at the half way mark of his training on Local Control.

Congratulations to Cpl Knudtson!

## New Airspace Reaps Traffic Increase

After our first full year of controlling an additional 3,800 square miles of airspace, our Approach Control Operations have increased by 37% annually from 64,713 to 88,335. Instrument approaches into airports within this new airspace, Manteo (MQI), Washington (OCW) and Plymouth (PMZ), totaled 293.

## ATC Marine Completes 1,000 Approaches

On 18 Mar 2016 at 1730Z, Cpl Justin D. McDaniel completed his 1,000<sup>th</sup> GCA by controlling a Coast Guard C-130 on a No Gyro PAR. He is the first Marine to reach this milestone since 2011 and the first Approach Controller since 2005.

Cpl McDaniel had just received a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal in December for his ability to guide an AV-8 during bad weather that had lost its main navigation system. He was also chosen as the Controller of the Quarter last October.

# Training

## Training Program Statistics

	<u>Jan-Mar</u>
OJT Hours	3,363.15
OJF Hours	408.93
Tower Simulation (Training)	90.25
Radar Simulation (Training)	288.77
Simulated GCAs	1,477
MOSs Issued	24
Position Qualifications	56

## From The Schoolhouse

LCpl Alexander C. Brawn	5 Jan 16
LCpl Jacob S. Greening	5 Jan 16
PFC Brandon T. Brewington	28 Jan 16
LCpl Jordan G. Taylor	25 Mar 16
PFC Aaron W. Gentis (RESERVE)	25 Mar 16

## Qualifications

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>MOS</u>
Cpl J. L. Perez	4 Jan 16	APW	7254
Cpl M. E. English	4 Jan 16	FC	7257R
Cpl S. M. Lawrence	11 Jan 16	GC	7257T
Sgt W. L. Slater	14 Jan 16	RD	
LCpl C. R. Hill	20 Jan 16	APW	7253/54
Cpl K. J. Harte	21 Jan 16	AR	7253
SSgt R. M. Guinn	21 Jan 16	FC	7257R
Cpl M. W. McMahan	26 Jan 16	RD	
LCpl A. M. Mamula	26 Jan 16	FD	
Sgt J. J. Hall	27 Jan 16	APN	
Sgt J. J. Hall	27 Jan 16	AR	
Sgt C. T. Debevec	1 Feb 16	AR	7253
Cpl J. D. McDaniel	2 Feb 16	AR	
Sgt C. T. Debevec	2 Feb 16	FC	
LCpl J. E. Tarver	2 Feb 16	FC	7257R
LCpl D. T. CurryCavalier	4 Feb 16	GC	7257T
SSgt R. M. Guinn	8 Feb 16	APW	7253/54
Cpl A. A. Mondloch	8 Feb 16	FC	
GySgt L. S. Cruz	11 Feb 16	APN	
GySgt L. S. Cruz	12 Feb 16	LC	

## Qualifications

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>MOS</u>
LCpl B. T. Twiner	17 Feb 16	FC	7257R
Sgt F. M. Finch	18 Feb 16	LC	7252
SSgt S. P. Armstrong	19 Feb 16	APW	
Cpl S. M. Browning	25 Feb 16	GC	7257T
LCpl A. M. Mamula	26 Feb 16	GC	7257T
SSgt M. A. Smith	3 Mar 16	AR	7253
Cpl D. D. Prescod	8 Mar 16	FC	7257R
SSgt B. L. Pugh	8 Mar 16	RD	
SSgt C. T. Steinman	9 Mar 16	APW	7253/54
Cpl A. A. Mondloch	9 Mar 16	RD	
LCpl M. T. Lundgren	16 Mar 16	RD	
LCpl P. A. Zamora	17 Mar 16	FD	
SSgt B. L. Pugh	18 Mar 16	FC	
Cpl R. J. Becker	18 Mar 16	LC	7252
Sgt J. J. Hall	19 Mar 16	APE	
Sgt D. C. Haydel	19 Mar 16	LC	7252
SSgt J. A. Michael	25 Mar 16	AR	7253
LCpl T. Nguyen	25 Mar 16	FD	
LCpl A. A. Plata	28 Mar 16	FD	
PFC M. A. Beacham	31 Mar 16	GC	7257T



# To The Point

with  
**Joe Hendrickson**

## WHAT IS A FACILITY WATCH OFFICER?

I remember during my first few months of GCA training that one of the duties of a Facility Watch Officer was to monitor all radar approaches conducted in IFR conditions. I have never been able to find a document to back this up but it made sense at the time. It also seemed like back then that most of the FWOs were still officers.

The current definition of a Facility Watch Officer is quite varied amongst our facilities and the level of qualification that is required depends on the person that is expected to take these responsibilities. At air stations, the FWO is rarely an officer even though there is no language in NATOPS that says it can be someone other than an officer. There is no argument that the ATC Facility Officer is an officer's billet but when it comes to FWO, the requirement to be an officer never seems to come up. We all know that an FWO is required to be on duty at all times the facility is in operation but that did not become a requirement until 2009.

When analyzing the NATOPS responsibilities of an FWO, the billet implies nothing more than a liaison for the ATCFO, a person that assures that others have done their jobs, and a collector of information for complaints and hazard reports. I believe that because we have not been able to develop and employ young officers in this billet, we have chosen to combine it with qualified personnel that are already there. Supervising a supervisor that is already being supervised by a branch chief is not efficient. I have never been in a facility where there are three persons in a branch actively exercising their billets of FWO, branch chief and branch supervisor on a routine basis, we don't have the luxury.

Looking at other facility manuals, we can see that hybrids of this billet are sometimes necessary. For example:

**Quantico** – The FWO is normally the controller holding the most qualifications. In cases where two

controllers hold the same qualifications, the senior ranking controller is normally assigned as the FWO.

**Yuma** – The FWO will normally be filled by the civilian crew supervisor on each crew. In their absence, an alternate FWO shall be assigned this function from the most current list of designated alternate FWOs.

**Miramar** - During published airfield operating hours, the Crew Chief shall be the assigned FWO and be present in the facility. In his or her absence, the Crew Chief shall designate a FWO to assume the watch.

**Beaufort** – Any qualified controller may serve in this capacity if so designated by the Commanding Officer and assigned by the ATCFO. A Special Category FWO may be assigned to operate when the ATC Facility is operating in a reduced mode, i.e., only the Tower or only the TRACON.

**Cherry Point** - An FWO13 is considered available when he/she is physically present in the radar branch and is able to perform the duties of the FWO/RS. If the FWO13 leaves the radar branch, or is engaged in an activity which may interfere with or preclude the performance of FWO/RS duties, assignment to the NAVAIR operational billet of FWO will normally be given to an FWO12.

The most controversial statement in the FWO definition is "The ATCFWO shall have attained the position qualifications and ATCS rating required to be MOS qualified." If we are strictly speaking of officers, we define this as qualified on Radar Flight Data, Radar Final Control, Tower Flight Data and Ground Control. However, the T&R Manual details event and designation requirements for enlisted FWOs.

Now, we all know that an enlisted Marine only needs two position qualifications for an MOS so, by definition, a LCpl with two radar qualifications could be an FWO. Obviously what we have here is an established minimum requirement along with a list of duties and

responsibilities which must be considered prior to any designation. In reality, we usually employ the most qualified and experienced person, be it civilian or military, and normally combine it with a branch supervisor so that we have a single point of contact and to maximize personnel assignments. Another interesting thing about T&R is that when an officer completes the requirements for FWO, it is a one-time entry as CERT-6500 but when an enlisted controller meets the same requirements it is entered as DESG-6401 by the authority of the ATCFO.

Coming out of the Dark Ages of the mid 1990s, Maj Muhlenberg felt that the wishy-washy ambiguity of the FWO did not fit with the supervisory structure that was being exercised at Cherry Point. We didn't routinely choose FWOs, we had fully qualified GS-13s in charge of each crew that carried out these tasks. Her choice to employ the Navy billets of FWS along with branch chiefs made better sense. By definition, FWOs, RSs and TSs are billets that take turns from day to day, whereas we had billets that allowed for the same person to be in charge every day for each crew. Cherry Point has evolved over the years to the point that the responsibilities of the FWO should remain within the radar branch at all times and routinely combined with the RS.

Confusion about the billet began when the ATC NATOPS Manual was revised on 15 Sep 2006. Appendix B jumped the gun and amended an evaluation checklist question to read "Is an FWS/FWO on duty at the facility at all times during hours of operation?" even though this was not a written requirement.

As we all know from our experience during past evaluations, the checklist question was authority enough. To add further confusion, during 2007, Maj Horton at MCIEAST abolished the use of FWS and CIC to define the differences between our GS-13s and GS-12s. We ended up with about 20 designated FWOs that had different levels of responsibilities and an ambiguous requirement to be on duty at all times. After several tries with creative acronyms and variations, we just recently settled on FWO12 and FWO13 as our new descriptors. The requirement for a full time FWO was not added to the billet until 1 Jul 2009.

Many of the duties of the FWO are to "assure" tasks are completed by the branch chiefs and supervisors who are required to "ensure" tasks are completed. To assure something is to promise that it's okay or completed. To ensure something is to actually get the job done. We often think that the FWO has a lot to do but it is usually because of combined positions.

So what is a Facility Watch Officer? It is a required set of duties, responsibilities, and authority that can be tailored to whoever and whatever you want or need it to be.

*Editor's Note – The current T&R Manual inadvertently deleted events ACAD-0551 through ACAD-0554 from the officer's prerequisites for FWO.*

