



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
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WASHINGTON, DC 20350-1000

SECNAVINST 1610.2A  
ASN (M&RA)  
15 Jul 2005

SECNAV INSTRUCTION 1610.2A

From: Secretary of the Navy

Subj: DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY (DON) POLICY ON HAZING

Ref: (a) SECDEF Memo of 28 Aug 97 (NOTAL)  
(b) SECNAVINST 5800.11A  
(c) OPNAVINST 3100.6G  
(d) OPNAVINST 5800.7  
(e) MCO 1700.28

1. Purpose. To provide a Department of Navy (DON) policy on the prohibition of hazing, establish enforcement guidelines, afford assistance to hazing victims/witnesses, and to implement reference (a).
2. Cancellation. SECNAVINST 1610.2
3. Applicability. This instruction applies to all DON military personnel, Regular and Reserve; Naval Academy and Reserve Officer Training Corps midshipmen; and Reservists performing active or inactive duty for training or engaging in any activity related to the performance of Department of Defense (DOD) Reserve duty or function.
4. Background. Hazing is contrary to our Core Values of Honor, Courage and Commitment. Adherence to Core Values by our Sailors and Marines is central to DON's ability to meet its global mission. These values have served the sea services well during war and peacetime. They are our guiding principles for treating every Sailor and Marine with dignity and respect, and as a valued member of the Navy and Marine Corps team. Hazing degrades and diminishes the ability of victims to function within their unit. It destroys our members' confidence and trust in their shipmates and is destructive to unit cohesion and combat readiness. Every member of DON must be afforded the opportunity to be a productive and contributing member free of

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hazing and its ill effects. Hazing is not part of our "time honored traditions" and it has no place in the modern Naval

Services. Hazing will not be tolerated by any member of the Navy or Marine Corps.

## 5. Discussion

a. Sailors and Marines are our most valuable resources. DON leadership has a responsibility to create and maintain an environment free from hazing.

b. Military customs and traditions have long been an integral part of the Navy and Marine Corps. Although in the past some hazing has occurred in conjunction with ceremonies, initiations or rites of passage, these activities, if properly supervised, can be effective leadership tools to instill esprit de corps, unit cohesion and respect for an accomplishment of another Sailor or Marine. While most ceremonies commemorate the many selfless feats of bravery of our military men and women, they also commemorate significant events. These feats and events form the basis upon which our Core Values of Honor, Courage and Commitment were founded. Graduations, chiefs' initiations, "crossing-the-line" ceremonies, and others are only meant to celebrate and recognize the achievements of individual Sailors or Marines or those of entire units. Service members must be able to work together, building-up, encouraging, and supporting their shipmates. Hazing behavior that is degrading, embarrassing or injurious is unprofessional and illegal.

c. Commanders must be aware of all ceremonies and initiations conducted within their organizations and take proactive steps to ensure that these activities do not violate this policy.

## 6. Definition

a. Hazing is defined as any conduct whereby a military member or members, regardless of service or rank, without proper authority causes another military member or members, regardless of service or rank, to suffer or be exposed to any activity which is cruel, abusive, humiliating, oppressive, demeaning, or harmful. Soliciting or coercing another to perpetrate any such activity is also considered hazing. Hazing need not involve physical contact among or between military members; it can be verbal or psychological in nature. Actual or implied consent to

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acts of hazing does not eliminate the culpability of the perpetrator.

b. Hazing can include, but is not limited to, the following: playing abusive or ridiculous tricks; threatening or offering violence or bodily harm to another; striking; branding; taping; tattooing; shaving; greasing; painting; requiring excessive physical exercise beyond what is required to meet standards; "pinning"; "tacking on"; "blood wings"; or forcing or requiring the consumption of food, alcohol, drugs, or any other substance.

c. Hazing does not include command-authorized or operational activities; the requisite training to prepare for such missions or operations; administrative corrective measures; extra military instruction; athletics events, command-authorized physical training, contests or competitions and other similar activities that are authorized by the chain of command.

7. Policy. It is DON policy that:

- a. Hazing is prohibited and will not be tolerated.
- b. No service member in the DON may engage in hazing or consent to acts of hazing being committed upon them.
- c. No commander or supervisor may, by act, word, deed, or omission, condone or ignore hazing if they know or reasonably should have known, that hazing may or did occur.
- d. It is the responsibility of every Sailor and Marine to ensure that hazing does not occur any form at any level. Every service member has the responsibility to make the appropriate authorities aware of each violation of this policy.
- e. Commanders or individuals in supervisory positions are responsible for ensuring that all ceremonies and initiations conducted within their organizations or commands comply with this policy.
- f. Supervisory personnel shall ensure that service members participating in command authorized ceremonies, initiations and other activities are treated with dignity and respect during these events.

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g. Reprisal actions against any victim or witness of hazing incidents are strictly prohibited.

8. Accountability and Enforcement. The policies stated in paragraph 7 are regulatory orders and they apply to all DON military personnel conduct which occurs in, or impacts, a DON working environment. Any violation, attempted violation or solicitation of another to violate this policy subjects involved members to appropriate administrative action and/or the Uniform Code of Military Justice(UCMJ), Art. 92 (failure to obey a lawful general order) and other UCMJ articles as they apply. This instruction is a lawful general order and it is effective immediately without any further implementation.

9. Victim and Witness Assistance. The commanding officer must be informed immediately of any allegation of hazing. Anyone who has been hazed, or whose command believes may have been subjected to hazing, will be considered to be a victim or witness as stated in reference (b). Every reported incident of hazing must be investigated to determine if the case is substantiated or unsubstantiated. Substantiated incidents of hazing must be reported via OPREP (reference (c)) to the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) or the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC). Hazing victim and witness assistance will be provided under the following guidelines:

a. Hazing victims/witnesses shall be advised of their rights immediately and offered legal advice, medical assistance, and counseling as necessary. Commanders shall ensure that victims/witnesses are advised of and given access to victim/witness advocacy services in accordance with reference (b). Reference (d) pertains to Navy personnel. Reference (e) pertains to Marine Corps personnel.

b. Extreme caution and sensitivity must be exercised throughout the course of the investigation to ensure that victims are not re-victimized. The investigation should also focus on the system which allowed the victim to be hazed and the surrounding organizational climate with a view to determine how to change or improve the system, thus preventing further hazing incidents.

10. Action. The CNO and CMC shall:

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a. Implement the policies of this instruction immediately from date of issuance.

b. Notify the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) or substantive changes to service policies not less than 30 days prior to implementation of those changes.

c. Issue this policy in all entry-level training to both enlisted and officer accessions programs.

d. Provide annual training and updates on hazing in Professional Military Education (PME) courses, leadership training, commander's courses, troop information programs, etc.

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