The Fulfillment Of Duty

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Military Duty and the Importance of Equipment Accountability

Duty is understood as the set of obligations that the military imposes on a person within the Army. Subordination, obedience, courage, audacity, loyalty, disinterest, self-denial, etc., are diverse aspects under which it is ordinarily presented. The fulfillment of duty is often harsh and difficult, and not rarely does it require painful sacrifices, but it is the only affordable way for the military man who has a conscience of his dignity and of the importance of the mission that the country has conferred on him. Fulfilling it with warmth, for formality's sake, is something that conflicts with the true spirit of the profession. The military man must find, in his own honor, the necessary stimulus to fulfill it excessively.

But the biggest issue in the Marine Corps is actual CIF gear; none of it is cheap at all. For example, if you lose even just one SAPI plate, you write the missing gear statement, then you go to IPAC to file the paperwork. Once all that is done, then however much it costs to replace that item, you either pay out of your own pocket or that money comes directly out of your pay.

People say gear adrift is a gift. But actually, gear adrift can cause everything written above, plus if someone knows who actually took the gear, then it becomes theft. And on top of losing gear or misplacing gear, you yourself are charged and can be NJP'd for those actions.

Personal Responsibility and the Consequences of Lost Gear

In my personal experience, my two roommates and I were assigned to a working party, and when we left our barracks room, we left the door unlocked along with a couple of locks on our personal stuff like coffin racks or wall lockers. So when we got back from our working party, we realized that we were missing gear, and we were freaking out trying to find out what had happened to a bunch of our gear. We came to find out that we had left stuff unlocked, and our sergeants came by our room to see if we were back from our working party yet. Once they realized that we were still gone, they decided to take some of our CIF gear to try to teach us a lesson. That lesson made all of us more careful about making sure that we lock everything up. Once we realized how much money all of the gear we left

unsecured would have cost us, it really made us realize that we had to be a lot more responsible and make sure everything was always secured if we were not in our room.

The gas mask was one of the things that was taken, and that alone would have cost about $1500. You can't just leave gear lying around without someone watching it at all times. If you leave your rifle lying around when you are in a combat zone, then there is a chance of someone grabbing it and possibly hurting or even killing a lot of your fellow Marines. If you lose a piece of gear while you are in the field, then everyone involved in the field operation will stop what they are doing, and you will all search for that missing piece of serialized gear. Losing a piece of gear could also be a direct violation of Article 108 of the UCMJ. Violation of Article 108 could possibly result in a court-martial, a bad-conduct discharge, and confinement for a year. If you are not being responsible for gear accountability, then that could potentially find its way back and make your higher-ups look bad. Another reason that gear accountability is important is that all of the gear that you are issued is reissued to another Marine after you turn it back in. That is why it is also important that you do not lose any of your gear, no matter how big or small that piece of gear might be (U.S. Department of Defense, 2019).

If you lose enough gear, then when you get court-martialed, you are actually spending more of the Marine Corps' money and making them waste their time doing all of the paperwork because you did not want to be accountable for your gear. Another reason why the Marine Corps is so strict on accountability is that out of all of the branches of the military, the Marine Corps has the smallest amount of money and does not have the money to go out and buy more gear that Marines lose (U.S. Army, n.d.).

Operational Readiness, Field Discipline, and Fulfillment of Duty

Gear accountability is not only important when you get to the Fleet Marine Force but also throughout Marine Corps recruit training, Marine combat training, and also your military occupational specialty school because if you have lost a piece of gear through any part of that training and did not replace it, then you will either have to pay for it or they will not issue your gear when you get to the Fleet Marine Force unless you find a way to straighten everything out with the issue department from the previous place that you were at. Gear accountability is so important that it is ridiculous. I don't think that anyone wants to have to pay the money for any gear that is lost because a lot of our gear can get very expensive. For example, our SAPI plates alone could cost up to about $2400.

This is also a good reason why you should not let other Marines use your gear because they could lose your gear, and then you are the one that ends up having to pay for it because you were the one that was issued that gear and most of it is serialized, so they will know if some of the gear that you are turning in was issued to you or someone else. Every single Marine is issued their own gear and is responsible for keeping track of and maintaining accountability for every single piece of gear, whether

they think that piece of gear is important or not. It is their gear, and they are responsible for making sure that they have it. No matter what, a Marine should not leave any part of their gear lying on the ground and ask someone to watch it. They need to either put their gear away where it belongs and make sure that they secure it or they just need to take it with them wherever they go.

Even when you are in the field, you need to be constantly checking to make sure that you still have all of your gear because some Marines look at the field as a chance to go and see if they can steal extra gear for themselves or gear that they are missing or that one of their buddies is missing. Reasons like these are why gear accountability is so important for every Marine in the entire Marine Corps. No matter what your billet or rank is, you need to know where every single piece of your gear is at all times, whether you need it at the time or not, because you never know when you are actually going to need any of your gear or certain pieces (International Committee of the Red Cross, 1949).

If you are not maintaining accountability, then when it comes time to grab certain pieces of gear, you will not know where they are exactly, and you will waste more time looking for them when you might not even have them anymore. But you would not know that until that moment happens because you were not being accountable for every single piece of your gear. You need to be sure that you are constantly checking to make sure that you still have all of your serialized gear at all times as well. This essay explains why it is important to keep track of every single piece of gear, whether it is a piece of serialized gear or not.

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