

# Communications Conventions

- Ref: (a) *FMFM 3-1 Command and Staff Action*, 21 May 1979. Ch1 17 Aug 88 and Ch2 4 May 89.  
(b) *FM 101-5-1 Operational Terms and Symbols*, Oct 1985.  
(c) *Joint Pub 1-02 Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, 1 Dec 89.  
(d) *Marine Corps Individual Records Administration Manual (IRAM)*, MCO P1070.12H, 13 Jul 92. Ch1 8 Feb 95.  
(e) *FM 21-26 Map Reading*.

- Encl: (1) Salt  
(2) Salt II  
(3) 19th Century Naval Watch Schedule  
(4) Orders Shorthand Abbreviations and Acronyms  
(5) AWS Marine Corps Units Authorized Abbreviations / Acronyms

## 1. Communicate Time Precisely.

- Use the 24-hour clock: 0910 is “Zero Nine Ten” NOT “oh.” 1700 is NOT “Five o’clock.”
- Dates are written: “3 Jul 98” or “980703.”
- Date-Time-Groups (DTG) are written: “03 1200 R NOV 1997.” Spaces can be omitted.
- There are 24 time zones, A—Y, with no J. East Coast is R, West Coast is U.
- D-Day and H-Hour. D+2 is two *days*. H-3 is three *hours*. If another unit of time is needed, write it out: “H+30 minutes.”
- L-Hour is the time aircraft land at the destination LZ. NOT the pickup time. NOT the liftoff time.

See Ref (a) *FMFM 3-1*.

## 2. Measure Distances in Meters and Kilometers. All weapons, maps and movements are metric.

- Use kilometers for hikes and convoys.
- Use meters for elevation, especially for artillery. Use feet for aviators: AGL versus ASL (MSL).
- Use fingers when referring to objects on the horizon.

## 3. Communicate Numbers Precisely.

- State all grids twice. Readback all grids received.
- Use the Artillery method for communicating numbers or pronounce individual digits.

3600 is “Three six-hundred” OR “Three six zero zero.”

## 4. Use Cardinal Directions. Avoid “left”, “right”, “front” or “rear.”

“To the South-East of our position.” NOT “Left-Rear.” NOT “Behind us.”

## 5. Use Degrees Magnetic for rough angular direction. Use Mils only for precise angular direction. Always state ‘Grid’ or ‘Magnetic’.

## 6. Use Proper Military Titles.

- Marines are addressed by their last name: “Finchley!”
- NCOs and SNCOs are addressed by their full rank only or their full rank followed by their last name. NCOs are NEVER addressed by last name only.
- Officers are initially addressed by their rank followed by their last name. Thereafter by “Sir.”
- Do NOT address peers in a familiar manner in front of Marines who do not have that privilege.
- Know the correct use of: “Skipper”, “Mister”, “Doc”, “Gunner”, and “Top.”
- Do NOT use paygrades. Always use rank.
- Know the naval rank structure.

**7. Talk Marine Corps.** Use naval terms to reinforce Marine Corps culture and traditions.

Avoid Army terms: “TDY”, “EM”, “hitch”, “troops”, “troopers”, “medic”, “GI”, “E-4”, or “Oh-six-hundred.”

See Encl (1) *Salt*, Encl (2) *Salt II*, and Encl (3) *19th Century Naval Watch Schedule*.

**8. Understand Operational Symbols.**

See Ref (a) *FMFM 3-1* — Appendix C and Ref (b) *FM 101-5-1*.  
See Unit SOP: **Tactical Control Measures**.

**9. Know Operational Terms.**

See Ref (b) *FM 101-5-1* and Ref (c) *Joint Pub 1-02*.

“Fix” versus “Block.” “Envelop” versus “Turn.”

**10. Understand Orders Shorthand.**

See Encl (4) *Orders Shorthand Acronyms and Abbreviations*.  
See Unit SOP: **Orders SOP**.

“3d Plat. RES. OCC BP21. BPT CATK(ABF) to CP32C IOT DENY EN WTHDRL RTE. ME on CATK.”

**11. Write Correct Unit Acronyms and Abbreviations.** Units are: “1st”, “2d”, “3d”, “4th.”

See Ref (a) *FMFM 3-1* and Ref (d) *IRAM* — Chapter 6 Abbreviations and Acronyms.  
See Encl (5) *AWS Marine Corps Units Authorized Abbreviations / Acronyms*.  
See Unit SOP: **Unit Identification SOP**.

**12. Use Common Terms for Terrain.**

See Ref (e) *FM 21-26*.

“Crossroads” versus “Road Intersection” versus “Road Junction.”

**13. Profanity.**

# Salt

**salt** *n.* an old-timer, an experienced Marine. **salty** *adj.* displaying sureness, surliness, and experience in language and behavior.

**belay** *v.* to secure or cancel. **blouse** *n.* uniform coat. *v.* to cuff. **boondockers** *n.* combat boots. **boot** *n.* a recruit. **brig** *n.* jail. **bulkhead** *n.* wall. **carry on** *v.* to continue. **chit** *n.* receipt. **chow** *n.* food. **cover** *n.* hat. **deck** *n.* floor. *v.* to knock someone down. **Devil Dog** *n.* Marine. **Doc** *n.* Navy corpsman. **field day** *n.* cleanup day. **gaff off** *v.* to push aside with a gaff, to ignore. **galley** *n.* kitchen. **gear** *n.* equipment. **grunt** *n.* infantryman. **gung-ho** *adj.* enthusiastic. **Gunner** *n.* Marine Gunner. **Gunny** *n.* Gunnery Sergeant. **hash mark** *n.* four-year service stripe. **hatch, hatchway** *n.* door, doorway. **head, head call** *n.* toilet, trip to toilet. **Irish pennant** *n.* stray thread. **ladder, ladderwell** *n.* stairs, stairwell. **Leatherneck** *n.* Marine. **mess** *n.* dining area. **Mister** *n.* Second Lieutenant. **outfit** *n.* unit. **overhead** *n.* ceiling. **passageway** *n.* hallway. **pogey bait** *n.* candy. **police, police call** *v.* to clean up. **port** *adj.* left. **quarters** *n.* living area. **rack** *n.* bed, bunk, sack. **sack** *n.* bed, bunk, rack. **scuttlebutt** *n.* water fountain, rumor. **seabag** *n.* canvas clothing bag. **shove off** *v.* to start moving. **skipper** *n.* Captain, commanding officer. **skivvies** *n.* underwear. **stanchion** *n.* support beam on ship. **square away** *v.* to arrange gear. **starboard** *adj.* right. **stow** *v.* to put gear away. **survey** *v.* to exchange gear. **swab** *n.,v.* mop. **swabbie, swab-jockey** *n.* sailor. **Top** *n.* Master Sergeant. **topside** *n.* above decks. **turn to** *v.* to start working. **utilities** *n.* field uniform. **watch** *n.* tour of duty. **wet down** *v.* to celebrate promotion.

# Salt II

**salt** *n.* an old-timer, an experienced Marine. **salty** *adj.* displaying sureness, surliness, and experience in language and behavior.

**aft** *n.* rear of ship. **amidships** *n.* middle of ship. **astern** *n.* behind, toward the ship's stern. **Asiatic** *adj.* crazy [coined for China Marines who had spent too long in Asia]. **aye-aye** *n.* acknowledgment of an order: "I understand and will obey. **billet** *n.* assigned sleeping space, assigned position in a unit. **break it out** *v.* to unpack and make ready stored gear. **catwalk** *n.* narrow walkway on ship. **cruise** *n.* a term of enlistment, a deployment. **D.I.** *n.* Drill Instructor. **ditty bag** *n.* cloth bag for stowage of personal effects. **dog** *n.* swivel used to secure hatch on ship, a fastener. **field strip** *v.* to disassemble in the field. **fo'c's'l** *n.* forward anchor space on ship. **gangway** *n.* entrance opening on ship. *v.* order to stand aside. **gangplank** *n.* ramp laid from ship to dock. **gyrene** *n.* Marine. **geedunk** *n.* snack food, vending machine, place to purchase snack food. **grinder** *n.* parade deck. **joe** *n.* coffee [named for abstemious Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels]. **lanyard** *n.* a rope line. **make knots** *v.* move with haste. **maggie's drawers** *n.* a red flag waved to indicate a miss on the rifle range. **piece** *n.* rifle, weapon. **quarterdeck** *n.* area of main deck reserved for ceremonies. **rig** *v.* to assemble. **sea lawyer** *n.* Marine who knows the regulations. **sea story** *n.* an exaggerated tale. **ship-over** *v.* to re-enlist. **slop chute** *n.* canteen or club. **smoking lamp** *n.* lantern lit to permit smoking aboard ship. **stacking swivel** *n.* hook beneath the bayonet lug on the M-1903 rifle used to stack arms, the back of the neck. **stern** *n.* rear of ship.

## 19th Century Naval Watch Schedule

1. **Watches.** Each day was divided into seven watches.

<b>Watch</b>	<b>Hours</b>
First Watch	2000 - 2400
Mid Watch	2400 - 0400
Morning Watch	0400 - 0800
Forenoon Watch	0800 - 1200
Afternoon Watch	1200 - 1600
First Dog Watch	1600 - 1800
Second Dog Watch	1800 - 2000

2. **Bells.** Each watch was further divided into eight 30-minute segments. The number of bells rung each half-hour announced the time.

<b>Bells</b>	<b>Hour</b>
1	0030
2	0100
3	0130
4	0200
5	0230
6	0300
7	0330
8	0400

## MARINE CORPS UNITS

### AUTHORIZED ABBREVIATION/ACRONYMS

AA Plat	Antiarmor Platoon (Weapons Company Dragons)
AAV	Assault Amphibious Vehicle
Arty	Artillery
Aslt Amphib Bn	Assault Amphibian Battalion      AAV Bn
AT Plat	Antitank Platoon (TOW)
AT Sect	Antitank Section (TOW)
Bn	Battalion
Btry	Battery
CA	Combined Arms
Cbt Engr Bn	Combat Engineer Battalion      CEB
Co	Company
Comm	Communications
Det	Detachment
Dir Spt Co	Direct Support Company (Trucks)
Div	Division
DS	Direct Support
Engr	Engineer
FAC	Forward Air Controller
FO	Forward Observer
FSSG	Force Service Support Group
Grp	Group
GS	General Support
HMG	Heavy Machine Gun
Hq, HQ	Headquarters
H&S	Headquarters and Service
LA	Light Armored
LAAD	Low Altitude Air Defense
LAI	Light Armor Infantry
LAR	Light Armored Reconnaissance
Ln	Liaison
MACG	Marine Air Control Group
Mar	Marines (Refers to a Marine Regiment)
MarDiv	Marine Division
Med	Medical
MT	Motor Transport
NGF	Naval Gunfire      NSFS      Naval Surface Fire Support
Plat	Platoon
(Rein)	Reinforced
Regt	Regiment
Res	Reserve
Sect	Section
SFCP	Shore Fire Control Party
Sqd	Squad
SRI	Surveillance, Reconnaissance, Intelligence
Tk	Tank
Tm	Team
Trk	Truck
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
Wpns Co	Weapons Co

## Orders Shorthand Abbreviations and Acronyms

AA	Assembly Area
ABF	Attack By Fire
AOF	Azimuth Of Fire
AP	Attack Position
ASLT	Assault
ATK	Attack
BOF	Base Of Fire
BP	Battle Position
BPT	Be Prepared To
COORD	Coordinate
CP	Check Point
CATK	Counterattack
CV	Critical Vulnerability
DEF	Defend (Defense)
DS	Direct Support
EA	Engagement Area
EN	Enemy
ESTAB	Establish
FIT	Follow In Trace
FR	From
FWD	Forward
INF	Infantry
IOT	In Order To
IZ	In Zone:
	AIZ    Attack in Zone
	CIZ    Clear in Zone
	DIZ    Defend in Zone
LD	Line of Departure
LOA	Limit Of Advance
ME	Main Effort
NLT	No Later Than
OCC	Occupy
O/O	On Order
OOM	Order Of Movement
PL	Phase Line
POF	Priority Of Fire
POS	Position
REIN	Reinforce
RES	Reserve
SBF	Support By Fire
SPT	Support
TRP	Target Reference Point
VIC	Vicinity