



RCT-7 Commander's Monthly Update

24 March 2013

Dear family, friends, and supporters of 7th Marine Regiment,

In case you have not noticed, the deployment for the RCT-7 Headquarters is closing in on the half-way mark. We have been deployed for nearly six months, and the slow deployment days turn into fast weeks as we find ourselves ending the month of March and into spring. The Weather is warming up here in Helmand Province, and your Marines continue to surpass expectations by providing exceptional support to our two Marine Battalions, two Georgian Battalions, and Security Force Assistance Teams across Helmand Province.

Since our last update, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) has arrived from Camp Lejeune, North Carolina and now serves as our higher headquarters. As some of you may know, 3d Battalion, 4th Marines has arrived and is replacing 2d Battalion, 7th Marines throughout areas of Northern Helmand Province. Unit turnovers are always a bitter-sweet event with one good, seasoned unit departing at the seven-month mark, and another good unit ready to continue the mission. The good news for the RCT Headquarters is that this unit turnover occurs with two great battalions from our regiment with established relationships, and it marks yet another significant milestone in our deployment as we reach the half-way point. 2d Battalion, 7th Marines has performed flawlessly in supporting the transition of security to our Afghan partners in four District Centers, and they deserve a heroes' welcome as they return to Twentynine Palms. At the same time, we welcome the Marines of 3d Battalion, 4th Marines back to Afghanistan less than a year and a half from their previous deployment. We know the Marines of the "Darkside" will carry on the good work of their brothers from 2d Battalion, 7th Marines.

The change in units and the change in seasons represents a very important time in our mission here. The Regiment continues to do important work at a critical time in the Afghan Campaign. Your Marines continue to work extremely hard, with long hours, and no complaints. Our mission remains to support our Afghan Army and Police partners, so that the Afghan National and local government institutions can sustain an improving security conditions and economic environment for the Afghan people. Sergeant Major Samuels and I feel very proud to be a part of this mission, and we are more proud of your Marines that are making history and continue to carry out our Nation's mission here.

As always, we want to thank all our family members, friends, and supporters for your continued support. We could not have made it this far without your support; thank you again. Please contact Mr. David Plaster, RCT-7 Family Readiness Officer for resource information and the latest updates. You can view the most recent pictures on DVIDS at: <http://www.dvidshub.net/unit/RCT7-MD> or log-on e-Marine at: <https://www.emarine.org/>

Semper Fidelis,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. E. Renforth'.

A. E. RENFORTH
Colonel, USMC