

References:

SECNAVINST 1650.1J

SECNAV M-1650.1

MCO 1650.1J

CMC GREEN LETTER 02-10

**SECTION 1. GENERAL POLICY:**

a. Eligibility to Participate in Unit Awards. When a unit award is issued, component, reinforcing and/or supporting units authorized to participate in the award will be designated. The commanding officer of the unit determines individual eligibility to participate in unit awards. Eligibility criteria for participation in PU, NU, and MU awards are as follows:

b. Unit size: Unit award nominations should recognize units no smaller than Battalions and Squadrons (not lower than units with an individual Monitored Command Code (MCCs)). It is understood that not every Marine unit is structured the same and for that reason, unit award nominations for echelons of command smaller than a Battalion, Squadron, or the unit at the whole MCC level, should include a justification letter stating why recognition is warranted. Conversely, prior to originating an award for a unit larger than a Regiment, the originator should consider if every unit in the command performed at a level deserving of an award. Originators should consider that when unit decorations are originated which recognize an entire Major Subordinate Command and subordinate units, it may cause the chain of command reviewing the award to ask if every subordinate unit performed at a level to merit a unit decoration or are there subordinate units being recognized that when separated from the whole, would not warrant such recognition.

c. Unit decorations are subject to the same time limits as personal awards outlined in SECNAVINST 1650.1j.

(1) Military personnel:

(a) All personnel permanently assigned to the cited unit, who were actually present and participated in the action(s) for which the unit was cited, are authorized to wear the ribbon permanently. Eligibility may be established by evidence in service records for Navy personnel and by information contained in the Marine Corps Total Force System for Marine Corps personnel. In cases where a determination cannot be made at the local level, requests for award eligibility shall be submitted to NPC (PERS-312) or CMC (MMMA) . When CMC (MMMA) receives the roster, all of the members permanently assigned to that unit will automatically receive the award when it is approved. This of course is provided the unit is properly listed and includes the time frame of unit participation.

(b) Transient, limited active duty for training or special active duty (less than 30 days), and temporary duty personnel assigned to the cited unit are normally ineligible. However, exceptions may be made for individuals temporarily attached to the cited unit to provide direct support through the particular skills they possess. The award recommendation must specifically mention that such personnel are recommended for participation in the award, and include certification from the cited unit's commanding officer that the individual(s) made a direct, recognizable contribution to the performance of the services that qualified the unit for the award. Such personnel will be authorized for participation by the awarding authority upon approval of the award. These are individuals who must be properly identified in the roster section by name.

Guidance for the Preparation and Submission of a Unit Award

(c) Reserve personnel and Individual Augmentees (IAs) assigned to a unit are eligible to receive unit awards and should be specifically considered by commanding officers for inclusion, as appropriate, based on the contributory service provided. These are individuals who must be properly identified in the roster section by name.

(2) Civilians. Participation of Civilians in Unit Awards. Subsequent to 16 March 1969, DON civilian U.S. citizen employees assigned to a unit recommended for a Presidential Unit Citation (PU), Navy Unit Commendation (NU), or Meritorious Unit Commendation (MU) may be nominated for participation in the award, provided the officer recommending the award certifies the civilian employees played a key role in the achievement for which the award is being recommended.

(a) Civilian personnel, when specifically authorized, may wear the appropriate lapel device. The command is responsible for ordering lapel devices for civilians eligible for the award.

(b) These individuals must be properly identified in the roster section by name.

(c) Note: Reservists who receive unit awards as civilians are not eligible to wear the ribbon bars on their military uniforms.

(d) Neither contractors nor foreign national civilians are eligible.

(3) Whole Units (supporting or components of the larger/principle unit). Recommendations that include participation of units of other U.S. Armed Forces shall be forwarded as follows by CNO or CMC, as appropriate, to obtain parent Service concurrence, prior to final approval. Other service units must be fully identified (no acronyms or abbreviations) all the way through the Division level (i.e. "110th Chemical Battalion, 555th Engineer Brigade, 7th Infantry Division, US Army" NOT simply "110th CB"). This is because other services and research entities must be able to accurately identify the unit. Include service specific unit codes in parentheses (i.e. UIC, RUC, etc).

(4) Individuals. If only individuals of another service (not whole units) are participating in a unit award, a full by-name list must be included with full EDIPI number, the unit identification code of the parent ADCON command, along with the time period that each member was present and participating in the award. (The Army and Air Force will not authorize individuals to retain the award in their record if they are not identified by Rank, Full Name, EDIPI, Parent Command UIC, Award Period.)

(5) Foreign Unit/Service Member Participation. Recommendations that include participation of units of friendly foreign nations require the specific concurrence of the American Ambassador and the Defense Attaché to the country of the proposed recipient(s) prior to forwarding the recommendation to CNO, CMC, and/or SECNAV. This means that submitting commands must submit for, and receive positive concurrence from the American Ambassador (or Chief of Mission) and the American Defense Attaché stationed in that country. These concurrence letters must be attached to the recommendation.

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**SECTION 2. AWARD COMPONENTS/GUIDANCE FOR A UNIT AWARD SUBMISSION.** A unit award recommendation shall contain the following components:

a. **Roster/Total Estimate of Personnel.** Also known as "List of Units and Personnel", should include a complete list of all units recommended for participation, including staffs when appropriate, with dates of attachment to the unit recommended for citation. A unit award is submitted for the principle unit and will include subordinate units that composed or supported said principle unit. This section is **CRITICAL** because it is here where CMC (MMMA) will identify all supporting/component units/sub-

Guidance for the Preparation and Submission of a Unit Award

units, all additional personnel that aren't automatically part of the principle unit. The roster should be uploaded in the Roster tab of the iAPS case. **Any unit award submission that does not include a roster must at a minimum provide the estimated total number of personnel eligible in the roster section of iAPS.** Anytime a unit decoration is submitted without a roster, CMC MMMA will assume that only those personnel directly assigned to the cited command are eligible and that there are not subordinate units, attachments, individual augments, or civilians included.

(1) **Additional Marine Units:**

(a) In this section, you must list all units that are not automatically recognized as a part of the command being recognized. For example, if this award is for 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 2d Marine Division, you would not normally need to list the rifle companies that are a part of 1/6 by the Table of Organization (however, there is no harm in doing so for clarity). However, if the unit is operating in reduced strength with subordinate units detached, it is then required that the command identify the units that were attached.

(b) If Golf Company from 2d Tank Battalion, 2d Marine Division was attached to 1/6 during the meritorious period, then "Golf Company, 2d Tank Battalion, 2d Marine Division" would need to be listed in "Additional Marine Units".

(c) Formatting. The unit's full garrison name needs to be written out (no abbreviations). Any task force/MAGTF formed units will need their components fully described by the unit's garrison names. Official detachments can be referred to as "Detachment" e.g. "Detachment, Golf Company, 2d Tank Battalion, 2d Marine Division".

(d) Note: If it is not possible to use MCTFS to determine who was a member of a detachment or subunit during that time, the command should include their name under Marine Support Personnel to that they will be able to receive the award. When a unit award is approved, IPAC's will use the member's chronological history to verify their unit assignment at the time. If the unit and the member's chronological history do not line up, they will not receive the award on their records. As a general rule, units without an MCC such as small task organized or temporary unit, need a by-name list appended in any situation.

(e) If personnel were attached TAD/IA to these units during this period, those individuals attached TAD must be listed by name (in the Marine Support Personnel section).

(f) If there are subcomponents units of a supporting unit, indent to indicate the task organization.

(g) For all units/subcomponents, include the period of time that the unit/subunit was participating in the award next to the unit name (even if it was for the entire period of the award's action dates).

(2) **Armed Service Units (Other Service/Foreign Units):**

(a) If any other service units or foreign service units were attached to/supporting the command being recognized, they must be listed. The full unit's garrison name needs to be written out. E.g. "110th Chemical Battalion, 555th Engineer Brigade, 7th Infantry Division, US Army" NOT simply "110th CB".

Guidance for the Preparation and Submission of a Unit Award

(b) The unit name used should be the unit’s garrison name. So if the unit has a different, temporary designation (with happens often when deployed), identify the temporary name and the unit’s permanent garrison name.

(c) For example, when deployed, “110th Chemical Battalion” is “Brigade Combat Team Raptor-Laser”. Brigade Combat Team Raptor-Laser is attached to 1st Battalion, 6th Marines during combat operations. The other service unit should be listed on the roster with the temporary name and the permanent name in parentheses as Brigade Combat Team Raptor-Laser (110th Chemical Battalion, 555th Engineer Brigade, 7th Infantry Division, US Army). If there are subcomponents units of a supporting unit, indent to indicate the task organization (follow example from above).

(d) If any of these other Service units also have personnel attached TAD/IA to them during this period, those individuals attached TAD should also be listed by name (in the Armed Services Support Personnel section).

(3) **Marine Support Personnel**. Fully list all members that were individually assigned to the command and not permanently assigned to the principle unit or a listed supporting/participating unit. Format names with Rank FName M.I. LName, Service i.e. Capt Joseph B. Begala, USMC or 2ndLt Nathan B. Stokes, USMCR. Include the period that they were attached to the command and participating in the award (even if participated for the entire period of the action dates). Example formatting:

<b>Marine Support Personnel</b>					
<b>Rank / Grade</b>	<b>Full Name (Last, First, M. I.)</b>	<b>Parent Command Name</b>	<b>Parent Command UIC/ RUC/ MCC</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>
Capt/O3	Binotz, John M.	Headquarters, 2d Marine Logistics Group		dd-mon-yy	dd-mon-yy

(4) **Armed Services Support Personnel (Other Service/Foreign Personnel)**:

(a) HQMC is required to receive concurrence from other Services for individuals participating in a DoN unit award. Therefore, the other service will need to accurately and easily identify the service member and the timeframe he/she participated in the unit award. **Other services refers to non-Department of the Navy Personnel (ie: Army, Air Force, Army National Guard, Air Force National Guard, Coast Guard Personnel)**

(b) For other service personnel (Army, Air force, etc.). Fully list all members that were individually assigned to the Marine unit cited and not as a part of other service supporting units. It is not necessary to list the individual members of Armed Service Units already listed; just ensure the other service unit with their full name, other service unit name, UIC, support start date and end date. For other service members, include: Rank, Last Name, First Name, MI, Service Component, personal identifier (EDIPI/service number/date of birth [foreign members]), the parent command UIC, and dates of participation. For other service personnel, it is most critical to include the parent command Unit Identification Code; the parent service will not authorize concurrence without the parent UIC being identified. When listing their component/service, this needs to be specific and written out. For example, the United States Army and the United States Army National Guard are two distinct entities for awards purposes, and their personnel must be correctly identified. Do not abbreviate any ranks.

Guidance for the Preparation and Submission of a Unit Award

(c) For Foreign Service personnel, list them here as well. Note: any award with foreign service personnel listed as participating will need to be accompanied by a concurrence from the American Ambassador (or Chief of Mission) and the American Defense Attaché stationed in that country. These concurrence letters must be attached to the recommendation. Additionally, an NCIS background check will need to be conducted and a DIA background check (for O-6 level officers and above). The results of any background check must be attached.

(5) **Civilians.** If civilians are nominated for participation, include a by-name of nominees, the total number of civilians nominated, certification that they played a key role in the achievement for which the award is being recommended, and a statement that they are U.S. citizens and DON employees.

(a) Neither contractors nor foreign national civilians are eligible.

(b) All DoN civilians must be listed. Contractors and Other service civilians are not authorized to participate in DoN unit awards. List GS grade, FName, M.I., LNAME, affiliation, and participation dates. For example:

36	<b>Civilians</b>					
37	Civil Grade	Fname	MI	Lname	Affiliation	Dates
38	GS-11	Lee	B.	Dean	DoN Civilian	09JUL14-10SEPT14
39	NAF-13	Blaine	N.	Stokes	NAF Employee	09JUL14-10SEPT14
40	GS-4	Christopher	J.	Smith	DoN Civilian	09JUL14-10SEPT14
41	AND NO OTHERS					

(6) **Number of personnel participating.** An estimate of the total number of personnel (broken down by MO, ME, NO, NE, CIV, OTH, Foreign) who would be eligible to participate in the award if approved. Give an educated guess.

(7) **Example of Total Estimate, Unit List, and Individual Roster.** (Submit in MS Excel)

Unit Award Eligible Population						
<b>Total Number:</b>					100	
MO	ME	NO	NE	CIV	Other Service	Foreign
20	50	5	10	5	10	0
List of Eligible Units						
Unit Full Name	Component	UIC	RUC	MCC	Action Period Begin	Action Period End
HQ Co, 3d Battalion, 3d Marines, 3d Marine Division	USMC	M13130	13130	V33	2 Jan 2016	30 Jul 2017
Kilo Co	USMC	M13130	13130	V33	20 Jan 2016	15 Jul 2017
India Co	USMC	M13130	13130	V33	20 Jan 2016	15 Jul 2017
Lima Co	USMC	M13130	13130	V33	20 Jan 2016	15 Jul 2017
Weapons Co	USMC	M13130	13140	V33	20 Jan 2016	15 Jul 2017
Det, HQ, 101st Airborne Div	USA	WAB1AA	N/A	N/A	15 Feb	18 Jul

Guidance for the Preparation and Submission of a Unit Award

					2016	2017
Task Force Wagram (40th French Artillery Regiment)	Foreign Unit - French Army	N/A	N/A	N/A	15 Feb 2016	30 Jul 2017

Example continued

List of Other Service / Foreign Support Personnel							
Rank/Grade	Full Name (Last, First, MI)	EDIPI/Service Number / DOB (Foreign Only)	Component	Unit	Parent Command UIC	Action Period Begin	Action Period End
First Lieutenant	Nelson, Toby R.	2345678912	USA	101st Airborne Division	WAB1AA	15 Jan 2016	10 Jul 2017
Captain	Binotz, Jay B.	3456789123	USA (Nat Guard)	151st Regional Support Group MAARNG	WP9PAA	15 Feb 2016	18 Jul 2017
Colour Sergeant	Mack, John R.	5-Dec-1983	Foreign-UK Royal Marines	40 Commando, Royal Marines	N/A	15 Feb 2016	18 Jul 2017
Eligible Civilians							
Grade	Unit / UIC	Full Name		Affiliation		Action Period Begin	Action Period End
GS-14	MMMA, HQMC / M54000	Roberts, Lee, E.		DoN Civilian		5 May 2016	20 Jul 2016

b. **Previous or Pending Unit Awards.** List of existing and/or pending unit awards failing within the time frame of the recommendation for component/supporting units. Identify any previous unit awards that have been approved or recommended for any units on the list. If there have been no previous unit awards for the period of the recommendation, a statement to this effect should be included. Contact CMC, MMMA if unable to verify.

c. **Action Period/inclusive dates of award:** If the award timeframe exceeds 18 months, ensure that you include amplifying information in the award write up to specifically justify going outside of this limit. The standard is 18 months to allow comparison to other units.

(1) Guidance for Active component units:

(a) Active component unit award recommendations should have a meritorious period of 18 months or less.

(b) Letter of Justification. Recommendations with a meritorious period longer than 18 months must contain a letter of justification from the Marine Component Commander providing specific justification for a period longer than 18 months. A unit award recommendation with a meritorious period longer than 30 months will not normally receive favorable consideration.

Guidance for the Preparation and Submission of a Unit Award

(c) CMC(MMMA) will return unit award recommendations with meritorious periods longer than 18 months that do not contain a letter of justification. Commands with awards returned under these circumstances will have the option of providing a letter of justification or limiting the meritorious period for consideration to 18 months or less.

(2) Guidance for Reserve component units. The Commander, Marine Forces Reserve will provide the appropriate letter of justification, when required.

(a) Mobilized units. Award recommendations for Reserve component units mobilized for all or the majority of the meritorious period will follow the guidance in paragraph 1.a above.

(b) Other Reserve component units. Awards for Reserve component units not mobilized during the meritorious period may cite the unit's accomplishments during 24 months without a letter of justification. Unit award recommendations covering more than 36 months will not normally receive favorable consideration.

d. Narrative of Action/Summary of Action:

(1) A narrative justification containing sufficient data, in light of the eligibility criteria, to enable the reviewing and approving authorities to consider them adequately. The narrative should be specific and direct in establishing why the unit has earned this distinction and exactly what sets this unit apart from its peers (what makes your unit special?). Avoid a reproduction of the command chronology and focus on unique accomplishments that make the unit stand out from other similar units.

(2) The summary of action should be written in a chronological order unless there is a different logical format for the presentation of information (i.e. written in functional categories). Avoid superlatives and laudatory comments (save this language for the citation). Endorsers and reviewers do not care how many adjectives the writer uses, they care about information. What matters are the facts presented, especially those facts or actions that specifically describe how that the unit performed head and shoulders above similar units. Show how the unit performed meritoriously, do not just say that their actions were meritorious. The merit of any stated action or accomplishment should be self-evident to the reader. If it is not, you should include the explanation or analysis of why the reader should care about a given accomplishment.

(3) It is highly recommended that the length of Narratives/Summaries of Action range from **2-4 pages maximum**. If the writer is producing more than that, typically the write up is being crafted with too much "filler". The risk of a "fluffed up" Narrative is that the real outstanding accomplishments will get lost in the background noise of superlatives. Endorsers and Board Members will read such awards and conclude that the unit just copied and pasted their command chronology because they really did not do anything truly outstanding.

(4) For PU recommendations only, include an unclassified executive summary of the justification for the award in narrative form, no more than three pages long, including figures on friendly and enemy casualties, number and types of personal awards issued as a result of the action, and a description of damage incurred by both sides. Additionally, provide an approved valor award roster by rank, name, component, unit, award received and approval date for all PU nominations.

Guidance for the Preparation and Submission of a Unit Award

Example: PU nomination ICO II MEF (FWD) valor award list

Rank	Full Name	Component	Billet	Unit at Time of Action	Approved Award	Approval Date
1stLt	Doe, John B.	USMC	1st Platoon Commander	3d Bn, 3d Marines, RCT-5, 2d MARDIV FWD	NX	10 Aug 2020
LCpl	Olsen, Richard B.	USMC	Embarkation Specialist	HQ, MAGTF Spt Bn, 1st MLG (FWD)	BV	10 Aug 2020
Sgt	Johnson, Kirk A.	USMC	PSD NCOIC	CE, II MEF (FWD), Headquarters Group	SS	19 Oct 2020

e. **Proposed Citation.** Example: “For exceptionally meritorious service (achievement) during assigned missions from (day, month, year) to (day, month, year) . The personnel of NAME OF PRINCIPLE UNIT conducted challenging support missions in an outstanding fashion, leading the way in operational employment, professional innovation and tactical development. NAME OF PRINCIPLE UNIT mobilized, deployed and began combat operations within ten days of receiving their mobilization orders in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. Assigned to various Joint commands, the NAME OF PRINCIPLE UNIT completed more than 1,500 combat flight hours and 850 combat sorties in direct support of U.S. and multi-national forces. Their exceptional efforts significantly impeded enemy forces from taking action against Coalition forces. NAME OF PRINCIPLE UNIT 'S unparalleled record of achievement affirms the outstanding technical ability and esprit de corps of the NAME OF PRINCIPLE UNIT. By their truly distinctive achievements, extensive enthusiasm, and unfailing devotion to duty, the officers, enlisted personnel and civilian employees of NAME OF PRINCIPLE UNIT reflected credit upon themselves and upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.”

f. **Properly Originating the Nomination.** Under no circumstances can any member in the unit cited in the award nor any individual who would be eligible to receive and wear the award originate the nomination. Unit award nominations must be originated in the improved awards processing system by the Immediate Superior In Command at the next higher echelon of the unit cited. Example: a nomination for the MU for a Marine Expeditionary Force must be originated by the Marine Force (MARFOR) Commander. Unit award nominations for MARFORs or the Headquarters of MARFORs will be originated by the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps or the Joint Functional or Geographic Combatant Commander (Example: a unit award nomination for Marine Forces Central Command could be originated by the ACMC, or the Commander, U.S. Central Command). Award nominations originated by a functional or geographic combatant commander, should be completed on the hardcopy OPNAV 1650.14 and submitted to CMC, MMMA as a complete PDF with all unit award nomination components. (OPNAV 1650.14, summary of action, citation, and total estimated number of personnel, any other supporting documentation).



Guidance for the Preparation and Submission of a Unit Award

**SECTION 3. ENDORSEMENTS:**

a. Recommendations for all PU, NU, and MU awards shall be forwarded to the awarding authority through either the administrative (for sustained performance) or operational (for deployment) chain of command, as appropriate. If a type commander and/or fleet commander are part of the appropriate chain of command, the recommendation shall be forwarded through them for comment and recommendation. CNO or CMC, as appropriate, will endorse the recommendation when SECNAV is the approval authority. Under no circumstances will the commander of the unit(s) cited in the award endorse the nomination.

b. Nominations which include actions where the unit has operated under the control of a combatant commander for any portion of the meritorious period, the award must be endorsed by both the senior Marine Force Commander for the combatant commander and the normal chain of command. Example: A unit nomination for the MU for Marine Light-Attack Helicopter Squadron 167 (HMLA-269) which includes periods of service where the command was deployed as part of SPMAGTF Crisis Response-Central Command will be endorsed by both the Commander, Marine Forces Central Command and the Commander, Marine Forces Command. A critical requirement for both of these commanders is to ensure that the unit has not been included in the submission of multiple unit awards for the same period of service.

c. For reserve units, include an endorsement by the active component command the unit regularly reports to/mobilizes with. Also include an endorsement by the commander under whom the service or act was performed, if it is other than the active command to which the unit is regularly assigned.

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**SECTION 4. AWARD CRITERIA:**

a. Presidential Unit Citation. President of the United States to units of the U.S. Armed Forces and friendly foreign nations for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy. The unit must have displayed such gallantry, determination, and esprit de corps in accomplishing its mission, under extremely difficult and hazardous conditions, to have set it apart from and above other units participating in the same campaign.

(1) The degree of heroism required is the same as that which would be required for award of a Navy Cross to an individual.

(2) Navy Cross Criteria: Awarded to a person who, while serving in any capacity with the Navy or Marine Corps, distinguishes himself by extraordinary heroism not justifying the Medal of Honor:

(a) while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States;

(b) while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force; or

(c) while serving with friendly foreign forces in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.

(d) To warrant this distinctive decoration, the act or the execution of duty must be performed in the presence of great danger or at great personal risk and must be performed in such a manner as to set the individual apart from his shipmates or fellow Marines.

Guidance for the Preparation and Submission of a Unit Award

b. Navy Unit Commendation:

(1) Awarded by SECNAV to any unit of the Navy or Marine Corps that has distinguished itself by outstanding heroism in action against the enemy, but not sufficient to justify the award of the Presidential Unit Citation; or to any such unit that has distinguished itself by extremely meritorious service, not involving combat, but in support of military operations, rendering the unit outstanding compared to other units performing similar service. This award may also be conferred upon units of the other branches of the U.S. Armed Forces, and of armed forces of friendly foreign nations serving with the U.S. Armed Forces, provided such units meet the standards established for Navy and Marine Corps units.

(2) To justify this award, the unit must have performed service of a character comparable to that which would merit the award of a Silver Star Medal for heroism, or a Legion of Merit for meritorious service to an individual.

(3) Normal performance of duty or participation in a large number of combat missions does not, in itself, justify the award. An award will not be made to a unit for actions of one or more of its component parts, unless the unit performed uniformly as a team, in a manner justifying collective recognition.

(4) It is Marine Corps policy that NUC's are only recommended for units that were forward deployed and engaged in combat operations.

(5) Silver Star Criteria:

(a) Awarded to a person who, while serving in any capacity with the Navy or Marine Corps, is cited for gallantry in action that does not warrant a Medal of Honor or Navy Cross.

(b) While engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States;

(c) While engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force

c. Meritorious Unit Commendation:

(1) Awarded by SECNAV, CNO, or CMC to any unit of the Navy or Marine Corps that has distinguished itself, under combat or non-combat conditions, by either valorous or meritorious achievement, which renders the unit outstanding compared to other units performing similar service, but not sufficient to justify award of the Navy Unit Commendation. This award may also be conferred upon units of the other branches of the U.S. Armed Forces, and the armed forces of friendly foreign nations serving with U.S. Armed Forces, provided such units meet the standards established for Navy and Marine Corps units.

(2) To justify this award, the unit must have performed service of a character comparable to that which would merit the award of a Bronze Star Medal, or achievement of like caliber in a non-combat situation, to an individual.

(3) Normal performance of duty or participation in a large number of combat missions does not, in itself, justify the award. An award will not be made to a unit for actions of one or more of its component parts, unless the unit performed uniformly as a team in a manner fully justifying collective recognition.