

# 1st Marine Division Combat Cameraman's Tactical Handbook

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Combat Camera & Printing Unit  
1st Marine Division  
Camp Pendleton, California

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Name:
Rank:
Date this book opened:

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*“The pictorial record of the assault and capture of Iwo Jima is the finest both in quantity and quality to have emerged from the Pacific war to date. Not only that, but new speed records were set in transmitting both still and motion pictures to the people of the United States, who deserve to see them while they are still newsworthy.”*

C. W. Nimitz  
Fleet Admiral, U.S. Navy  
WWII

*“...Austin, while operating with forward elements of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division, voluntarily exposed himself to enemy fire on numerous occasions, in order to obtain motion pictures of Marine close air support strikes upon enemy positions less than two hundred yards distant.*

*On one occasion, he was wounded by shrapnel from an enemy mortar shell, which landed near his exposed position. Although he dropped his camera, he retrieved it and bravely continued to film the strike until Marine aircraft had neutralized the position. It was not until then, at the order of an officer serving as forward air controller, that he withdrew for treatment of the wound.”*

Passage from U.S. Marine Technical Sergeant Ralph J. Austin's  
Citation Korean War

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# UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

Combat Camera & Printing Unit  
1st Marine Division (REIN), FMF  
Camp Pendleton, CA 92055-5381

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## FOREWARD

This handbook contains reference material frequently used by United States Marine Corps Combat Cameramen during documentation of events, operations, exercises, contingencies, and real-world crises. This handbook is intended to be a handy compilation of important information for your daily use as a Combat Cameraman. Write, scribble, draw and record in this handbook any and all pertinent information you may need for future reference. In the space provided inside the front cover, write your name and date this handbook was opened. You will want to maintain these handbooks throughout your career. You never know when you will be called upon in the future to identify imagery you acquired in the past.

I challenge you to be as detailed as possible when recording information. Write down names, dates, technical notes or anything that might help you before and after your mission. Your imagery will become a part of the Corps' history and will affect its future, just like the Flag Raising on Iwo Jima did after WWII. Remember -- you are "*The Eyes and Ears of the MAGTF Commander*", a vital part of the Marine Corps warfighting mission.

Semper Fidelis,

**J. A. SANDERS**

Chief Warrant Officer, U.S. Marine Corps  
Combat Camera & Printing Officer  
1st Marine Division, (REIN) FMF

# Combat Cameraman's Tactical Notebook

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# Chapter 1

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## The Five C's of Photography and Videography

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Subjective shot... Subject looks into camera.  
U.S. Marine Corps Photograph by Private First Class Matt Decker,  
1st Marine Division – CAX 1-01

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## The Five C's of Photography & Videography

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The Five C's of Photography & Videography actually come from Joseph V. Mascelli's book on Cinematography. He called them the *Five C's of Cinematography*. Today Combat Cameramen are not trained as cinematographers, but Mascelli's principles still apply.

These Five C's are:

1. Camera Angles
  2. Continuity
  3. Cutting
  4. Close-ups
  5. Composition
- 

1. **Camera Angles** is more than just shooting higher or lower than the subject. It also encompasses the subjects within the shot. Remember to look for the following when documenting your events.

- ◆ Extreme Wide/Long-Shot
- ◆ Wide or Long-Shot
- ◆ Medium Shot
- ◆ Close-up
- ◆ Extreme Close-up
- ◆ High Angle
- ◆ Low Angle
- ◆ Eye or Subject Level
- ◆ Objective (Documenting the action, majority of shots)
- ◆ Subjective (Subject looks into camera)
- ◆ The Point of View (Looking through the sites of a weapon)

2. **Continuity** is the continuous, smooth logical flow of visual images, depicting the event in a coherent manner. When you shoot a picture story or videotape a sequential event, continuity provides a complete story for the audience.

3. **Cutting** takes out the unwanted images or scenes. It is accomplished by removing bad shots or takes, extra scenes or images, duplicated action, or any superfluous information. This is done preferably during the acquisition phase through shot selection,

arrangement, and timing. It should also be done in the imagery downloading or viewing phase.

4. **Close-ups** are a part of camera angles but stand alone as a tool to transport the viewer into the image or scene. Close-ups add feeling, show detail, clarify an event, and isolate specific actions or ideas. A single close-up can tell the entire story, but should never be the Combat Cameraman's only tool during documentation.

5. **Composition** is the arrangement of pictorial elements to form a unified, harmonious whole. The four previous C's can be interchanged between photography and videography almost without exception. Composition however has unique attributes when independently applied to photography and videography. A still image freezes a moment in space only, while video is composed in both space and time. In other words, a still image does not tell you how long the event took or will take, but if composed correctly can suggest movement or change. A videographer can turn on his camera to record an event and hold his audience's attention by movement alone. A simple snap shot without composition will leave an audience unmoved. The audience wants to see a story. This does not preclude a videographer from good composition, but rather challenges him to maintain good composition throughout the movement of the subject. The photographer is challenged to initiate good composition, which tells a story in order to maintain the audience's attention.

## Chapter 2

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### Storytelling

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This Long Shot or Establishing Shot “establishes” the scene for the Marines landing in Kenya during operation Natural Fire.

U.S. Marine Corps Photograph by Sergeant Adrien Olguin,  
1st Marine Division – Natural Fire 2000

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# Storytelling

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Telling the Marine Corps story is an integral part of your combat camera mission. Whether you are documenting training exercises for critique or capturing images of a humanitarian relief effort, you must be able to tell a complete story for your audience. The following technical and creative techniques should help you complete this mission.

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**1. Video.** The basic sequence contains a long shot (LS), medium shot (MS) and close-up (CU). Putting these together tells a pictorial story of an event. Adding the Reestablishing Shot (RS) and sometimes Extreme Close-ups (XCU) makes the *Extended Sequence*. Many times the LS is referred to as the Establishing Shot when used to establish the scene. This is still part of the basic sequence.

**2. Photography.** Photography uses wide shots (WS), medium shots (MS), and close-ups (CS). As we said earlier, photographs freeze a moment in space. Sequencing photographic moments in much the same manner videographers use scenes tells the complete story. Just like the Flag Raising on Iwo Jima, you may get that one picture which tells it all. If you only look for that one special image, then you will miss many smaller events that make a complete story.

**3. Uncontrolled Action.** For the most part as a Combat Cameraman you will find yourself in an uncontrolled environment. It is unrealistic to think you can actually stage or capture your shots during a live fire & maneuver or actual combat. Sometimes you will be able to control the environment during the training phase, but most commanders do not have the time or patience for this. Use a Wide or Establishing Shot during the initial part of the event where you have control. For instance, during WWII the Combat Cameramen established the scene of an amphibious landing by documenting their ride to the beach aboard the Amtracks or Navy boats. When they hit the beach all they could do was dodge bullets until they found a safe place from which to document

**4. The Complete Story.** While documenting an event you can find numerous stories to tell. These range from a basic story on how a Marine mounts the .50 caliber machine gun to its tripod to a complex one on a Humanitarian Relief effort from beginning to end. Complex stories are usually made up of smaller, simpler stories that happen along the way. You should document as much as possible from the work-up phase to debarkation or end of exercise. Think about what happens during each phase of the event. Use this to tell the complete story. Besides the actual operation/exercise, the following ideas should help while documenting an event:

Pre-deployment/Work-up

- ◆ Uniform inspections
- ◆ Vehicle staging
- ◆ Weapons storage
- ◆ Briefings
- ◆ Packing & marking boxes
- ◆ Loading equipment
- ◆ Classes & Training
- ◆ Goodbyes to families

Operations

- ◆ Water purification ops
- ◆ Physical fitness
- ◆ Operational Briefings
- ◆ Maintenance trends
- ◆ Medical operations
- ◆ NBC Operations
- ◆ Aerial recon
- ◆ Environmental effects on equipment and personnel
- ◆ Field Mess operations
- ◆ Mail operations
- ◆ Weapons training/ops
- ◆ Rehearsals
- ◆ Situational Awareness
- ◆ Fuel points
- ◆ Communications set up

Debarkation/End Exercise

- ◆ Equipment cleaning
- ◆ After Action briefs
- ◆ Vehicle readiness
- ◆ Retrograde
- ◆ Pack-up
- ◆ Home coming

## Chapter 3

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### The Visual Information Record Identification Number (VIRIN)

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**001031-M-2237F-001**

U.S. Marine Corps Photograph by Lance Corporal Chris Fitzgerald,  
Combined Arms Exercise 1-01, October 2000

The VIRIN above allows the Department of  
Defense to credit the Photographer and the United  
States Marine Corps for this image.

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## The Visual Information Record Identification Number

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1. A Visual Information Record Identification Number (VIRIN) is the DOD standard for assigning archive retrieval codes for each photograph, video sequence, piece of artwork, video production or multimedia production.

2. The VIRIN consists of fields that represent the date, service, cameraman's information, and sequential number. Example:

**19991208-M-1234A-029**

19991208	M	1234A	029
Year/month/day	M = Marine	Cameraman's last 4 of SSN and first letter of last name	Sequential number. This is the 29 <sup>th</sup> image taken by this photographer on 20001208

3. Upon creation and unless discarded, each non-production unit of media which satisfies the definition of official DOD imagery shall be assigned a VIRIN.

4. You need to know about VIRIN's because they are the ONLY DOD-approved means to code, file and retrieve imagery. VIRIN's are also file names for your digital imagery.

Example: **19991208-M-1234A-029.jpg**

5. The VIRIN does several things for you:

(1) It enables you to submit imagery to the Defense Visual Information Center (DVIC). DVIC is a DOD imagery repository that stores images for approximately ten years before forwarding them to the National Archives.

(2) It provides a tool for you to manage local archives.

(3) It provides a tool for you to quickly retrieve specific images.

(4) It helps DVIC to quickly research and retrieve images for your command.

# Chapter 4

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## The Caption

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“1st Marine Division Joint Color Guard accompanied by the Division Regimental and Battalion Colors during the 50th Anniversary Chosin Reservoir Commemoration Ceremonial Parade at Camp Pendleton on 7 December 2000. The Regimental and Battalion colors represented are the active units of those that served in the 1st Marine Division during the Chosin Campaign.”

U.S. Marine Corps Photograph by Private First Class Matt Decker

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## The Caption

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A caption is a brief narrative that describes an image (e.g. photograph, video scene or artwork). A good caption answers the questions **who, what, where, when, why** and sometimes **how**.

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1. The caption is due as soon as possible after the image is exposed or created.

2. You need to know about captions for several reasons:

(a) Captions add historical value to imagery.

(b) Captions are required if an image to be accepted by the Marine Corps Multimedia Accessioning Point (MCMAP) or DVIC. In other words, imagery without captions will NOT be accessioned.

(c) Captions have historically been one of the areas in which photographers and illustrators need the most improvement.

(d) Well written captions add to the value and usability of your imagery. For instance, newspapers, magazines and book authors are more likely to use a well-captioned image.

3. The caption does several things for you:

(1) Captions are a mission requirement, well written captions are part of your job.

(2) Well written captions help to get your imagery published. Well published imagery helps to advertise your unit's successes. This supports CMC guidance

(3) Captions ensure that the imagery your Marines risk their lives to capture will get sent to the MCMAP.

4. Use DD Form 2537 Visual Information Caption Sheet, which can be found and downloaded from <http://dodimagery.afis.osd.mil/> if you run out or do not have one with you.

5. Gather specific information during the shoot.

6. The following captions identify the image at the beginning of this chapter. The more information you provide the better the caption.

(a) Bad Caption: “Marines carrying flags during an official ceremony in December 2000.”

(b) Good Caption: “1st Marine Division Joint Color Guard accompanied by the Division Regimental and Battalion Colors during the 50th Anniversary Chosin Reservoir Commemoration Ceremonial Parade at Camp Pendleton on 7 December 2000. The Regimental and Battalion colors represented are the active units of those that served in the 1st Marine Division during the Chosin Campaign.”

7. If you have a computer with you loaded with MediaGrid or PhotoShop, you should imbed the information in the file as previously taught. If in doubt on how to do it call your shop for guidance.

## Chapter 5

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### Imagery Labels & Storage in the Field

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*Sgt John P. Smith*

*CAPEX 1 - 2000*

*21 January 2000*

*Tape 1 of 2*

This image above represents a hand written example of what a video label should include. It identifies videographer, exercise name, date, and number of tapes. Videotapes may contain numerous VIRIN's therefore they are not required on the face of the tape. But as you can see all the information is present to complete a VIRIN minus the last four of the SSN.

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# Imagery Labels & Storage in the Field

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## 1. Labels:

### a. Why do we label?

- It is an indelible, visible mark on the VI product. It identifies the product as the “Property of the United States Marine Corps” or “Official U. S. Marine Corps Imagery”.
- Every roll of film, CD, disk, or tape requires a label.
- It visibly marks the product as Official.
- It allows you to identify and catalog your products. It also gives you and your unit credit.
- At times you will need to send your actual imagery to the rear via a mail run or by any means available. Correct labeling will identify your imagery for the Combat Camera person on the receiving end.

b. Marking film, PCMCIA cards & tapes: This is usually done in the field and with a pen. The goal is to put as much info on the product as possible for identification. You may also digitally mark the images via the camera and its built in software when you set up the camera. Refer to your camera users manual for this detailed information. At a minimum include:

- Cameraman’s Rank & Full Name
- Event Name
- Date
- Tape/roll number

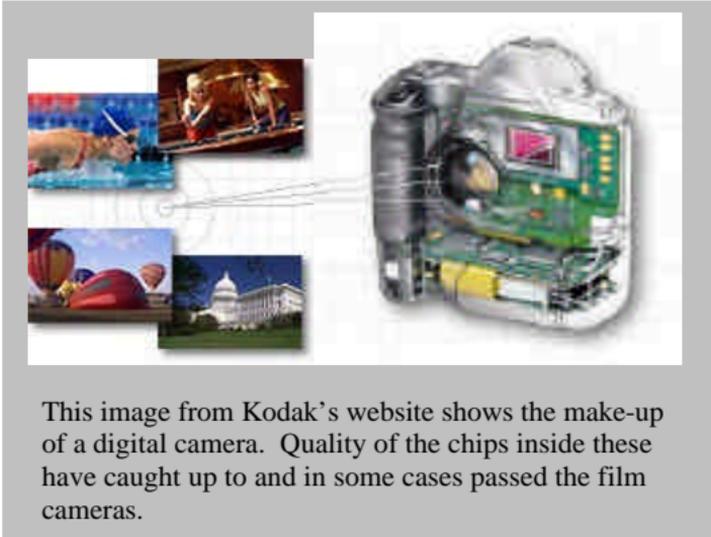
2. Storing digital imagery: If you have a computer available fulfill the VIRIN and captioning information per the Chapter 3 & 4 using MediaGrid or Adobe PhotoShop. It is best to put imagery on the hard drive and on a disk for back up. CD-ROM is preferred, but ZIP or even floppy is good in a pinch.

## Chapter 6

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### Digital Photo Imaging Standards

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# Digital Photo Imaging Standards

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1. Digital photo camera images vary in their resolution. The minimum resolution normally accepted is approximately 1000PPI. All the professional digital cameras meet this requirement. Lower resolution images are considered on a case-by-case basis. If your camera has the capability, capture in the TIFF file format. This will ensure the highest quality and the 1000PPI minimum standard. If it captures in JPEG, set your camera at the highest resolution or quality available. We achieve this by compressing the file using the JPEG method. All files transmitted to the JCCC must be compressed using the Joint Photographic Experts Group format (JPEG) format.
2. JPEG allows the user to select the amount of compression. For this standard the compression ratio must not exceed 15:1 and must not be less than 8:1. The compression is expressed in terms of a ratio because software manufacturers have changed the method used to specify compression levels, and may do so again in the future. Adobe® Photoshop® versions 4.0 or higher use settings of '8 to 12'.
3. File names must start with the VIRIN number for the image. There cannot be any spaces in the name. BE VERY CAREFUL ABOUT THIS!! The extension ".jpg" MUST be added AFTER the VIRIN. An example file name is: 970718-F-1207R-001.jpg
4. If captioning images in MediaGrid do the following:
  - ◆ Acquire via twain in PhotoShop
  - ◆ Do not change size or DPI
  - ◆ Save as JPEG on the highest setting for resolution/quality
  - ◆ Name file using .jpg as described above
  - ◆ Open in MediaGrid and use workspace to caption imagery

MediaGrid allows you to caption without affecting the image. It only changes the information in the IPTC header. Save all files back to hard drive every chance you get. Always back-up imagery to CD as soon as possible.

## Chapter 7

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### Imagery Transmission

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Sergeant Vega, J. and Lance Corporal Gonzalez, M. attached to Brigade Service Support Group, Communications detachment try to establish radio contact with Marine Expeditionary Forces Headquarters Group in Malindi, Kenya, using a PSC-5 communications device. The Marines are participating in exercise Natural Fire 2000 which is being conducted in the country of Kenya on the African Continent.

U.S. Marine Corps Photograph by Sergeant Adrien Olguin,  
1st Marine Division – Natural Fire 2000

# Imagery Transmission

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Transmission of imagery will be determined before you deploy or attach to a unit. You can use tactical radios and satellite equipment for this mission as well as e-mail and file transfer protocol (FTP).

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- 1. Tactical Radios.** When using tactical radios you will be required to use special software like ViaSat. The files will have to be very small and sometimes converted to grayscale. You will be trained on this before you depart. You should also have an SOP for these procedures.
- 2. Satellite.** Most of the time you will use INMARSAT to transmit imagery. You will also be trained on this before you depart. It requires you to follow strict procedures and maintain a log for all transmission time. Satellites allow you to send high quality imagery. On occasion you may be able to use the PSC-5 (see picture on previous page) to transmit imagery. It will not allow as big of files as an INMARSAT, but will get quality images to the rear.
- 3. E-mail.** Be careful when attaching images to e-mails, most network firewalls on bases limit incoming files to 2MB or less. You will want to make the files JPEG and keep their size as low as possible without degrading the quality. If a high quality image is required send it by itself at a higher quality.
- 4. FTP.** File Transfer Protocol allows you to send imagery across the network in very large file sizes. The Joint Combat Camera Center (JCCC) receives images this way. The FTP software is on your laptop. If you are on a different computer you can download a copy of it by from JCCC at <http://dodimagery.afis.osd.mil/>. FTP is very easy to use once you set up the user information. The JCCC set up information is on your computer desktop in a text file.

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## Chapter 8

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### Release of Imagery to the Public

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## Release of Imagery to the Public

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Combat Cameramen **do not** have the authority to release imagery to the public. This authority resides with the Commander and is usually done via the Public Affairs Officer (PAO). You **are** authorized to send imagery to the JCCC for internal distribution, but the on-scene commander must also authorize this. Most of the time this is worked out before deployment by the Command, PAO and the OIC/SNCOIC of your unit. Be sure to ask about releasing authority before you depart for an operation or exercise.

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Once approval has been given certain steps must be followed in order to ensure the imagery is identified for public release. The following must be included: Date of release, PAO Rank & Name, PAO Unit, and PAO phone number. Here is an example:

*Released on 01 Jan 2001, by: Capt I.M. Marine, 1st MARDIV PAO, DSN: 123-4567, Comm 123-456-4567.*

Each medium has a specific place to put the clearance:

1. Video. This is the easiest to identify. If you forward videotapes, the releasing information is written on the caption sheet at the end of the "Description of Project" in block 10,b.
2. Film. This is the same as Video via the caption sheet.
3. Digital Imagery. Whether scanned negatives or original digital images, the release is put in the IPTC header. PhotoShop uses the "Special Instructions" while MediaGrid actually states "Public Release". In either case, type the statement above in the appropriate block. Furthermore, you must type (Release) in parenthesis at the end of your caption in the Caption block.

Note: If the civilian press or media wants imagery on the scene, give the PAO a copy of disc or tape and let him/her release it.

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## Chapter 9

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### Useful Websites and Phone Numbers

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## Useful Websites and Phone Numbers

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The following sites and phone numbers may come in handy while deployed. Some also contain information on items within this book. Write any others you may need in the spaces provided.

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### Web sites:

- Division Intranet site <https://158.238.43.12/exchange>
- Camp Pendleton site <http://www.cpp.usmc.mil>
- Marine LINK <http://www.usmc.mil>
- Visual Information <http://www.tecom.usmc.mil/vim>
- JCCC at <http://dodimagery.afis.osd.mil/>

### Phone Numbers:

- DCCP: 760-725-5110/6183, Fax 1129, DSN 365
- VIM: 703-784-2963/2878, Fax 3204, DSN 278
- JCCC:
- HQBN Duty: 760-725-8805, DSN 365
- Division Duty: 760-725-5201, DSN 365
- OIC: \_\_\_\_\_
- SNCOIC: \_\_\_\_\_
- Camera Ops Chief: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
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