

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**STARFLEET MARINE  
CORPS**



**PUBLICATIONS  
MANUAL**

**Revision 2009**

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STARFLEET MARINE CORPS

# Publications Manual

2009 EDITION



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## Section 1 - Introduction

One of the most important sources of information in the STARFLEET Marine Corps are the manuals produced by TRACOM and the General Staff. These manuals represent a large volume of knowledge that helps the Marine on a multitude of topics; from taking courses at the STARFLEET Marine Academy to how to wear the uniform properly, is contained in those manuals. While the information contained in those manuals is important, the way the manuals look are just as important. Uniformity is key when dealing with the SFMC and SFMCA manuals. They should have the same look and feel so that when an individual picks up an SFMCA manual there is no question that it is a SFMC manual.

To help those Marines who have to write manuals or for those looking to do so, this manual was created. In this manual, you will find information on formatting, procedures, as well as on various other aspects of making a manual, and of course about the G-3 SFMC Publications Officer. So basically, this is a manual on how to produce manuals.

## Section 2 - The G-3 SFMC Publications Officer

### 2.01 Who or What is the G-3 SFMC Publications Officer?

From the SFMC Policy Manual 2009 Edition:

*This Marine is charged with overseeing the creation and revisions to any publications of the SFMC in order to generate a uniform look and appearance for all such documents. This Marine will oversee the creation and distribution of a standard template for all SFMC publications and assist the various commands as needed in order to help them get their official SFMC documents into the proper format for release to the membership.*

*Candidates for the position of G-3 Publications Officer should meet the following criteria: (1) have passed OTS (OCC is recommended); (2) have passed PD-10 and PD-20 from the SFMCA; and (3) be a member of STARFLEET, TISTFA in good standing. It is highly recommended that this Marine also have some experience in graphic design (either professional or amateur) that would translate into direct experience helpful in this post as well as access to the necessary programs for the task.*

The G-3 SFMC Publications Officer is a position that is considered to be DEPDANT Staff so the G-3 Officer answers and reports directly to the DEPDANT.

### 2.02 The Insignia



The current insignia is an ancient printing press surround by the orbits of two atoms. This design is loosely based on the old United States Navy Publications Divisions Crest. The printing press represents the time-honored tradition of publishing and the atoms represent the fact that most, if not all of the publications are done electronically.

### 2.03 The Uniform

There are no approved uniform variants for this position. Although as a member of the DEPDANT's staff the G3 Officer is authorized to wear the DEPDANT staff cord , as prescribed in the Marine Force Manual.

### 2.04 Tools of the Trade

The tools used by the G-3 Publications Officer vary and change from time to time. The tools used depend on the availability and cost of the various programs available in the market place. A common toolkit may look like this: Adobe CreativeStudio 4 (Photoshop, Indesign, Illustrator), Adobe Acrobat Professional, Microsoft Office (Word, Excel), and Microsoft Publisher. However it is recommended that Adobe Indesign be present since most STARFLEET publications are created in this program and most templates were created using this program.

### 2.05 Assignments

Assignments normally are passed to the G-3 Officer by the DEPDANT as the G-3 Officer is in the DEPDANT staff. This fact does not preclude assignments being handed down from the DANT, COFORCECOM, COINFOCOM, or COTRACOM. Although, in cases were the assignment comes from the COFORCECOM, COINFOCOM, or COTRACOM it is advisable to inform the DEPDANT about the assignment. Most of the time those commands will put in a request to use the services of the G-3 Officer with the DEPDANT who in turn contacts the G-3 Officer.

As with any publication there are deadlines and all effort should be made to make those deadlines and to deliver the product on time. Deadlines will change from time to time depending on the project, but for the SFMC and SFMCA manuals a strict timeline has been adopted. This timeline is discussed later in this manual.

### 2.06 The Publications

As of the printing of this manual the G-3 Officer is responsible for designing, maintaining, and in some cases writing the various general and SFMCA manuals for the SFMC. The position may eventually be responsible for other publications that may arise as situations warrant.

### Section 3 – Publication Time Line

Years ago there was no set time line for publication of any of the SFMC manuals, they were published whenever it was deemed necessary and so there were times when a manual was published two or three times a year. This, of course, was counter-productive and lead to confusion on the part of the membership as to which manual was in use at any given time. To alleviate this problem, it was decided in 2006, that **all** SFMC and TRACOM manuals would be updated and released on a yearly cycle culminating with their publication and released at STARFLEET's annual International Convention. Once this had been decided a timeline needed to be established that would allow for the manuals to be reviewed, revised and published in the time allotted without over burdening those working on them.

The time line outlined below is the time line that was established that fulfills the requirements, but please note that this time line is dependant on the IC being held in August of every year and consists of 181 or 182 calendar days. If the IC is not to be held in August, the time line could be shifted accordingly so that there are still 181 to 182 calendar days available for the work to be performed in. For example IC 2008 was to be held on June 27-29 therefore, the time line was shifted one month so that the publication cycle began on December 1, 2007.

SFMC Manual Publication Timeline	
Time Frame	Tasks
January 1 to January 31 (31 calendar days)	General Staff and TRACOM Staff should begin to gear up for the start of the publication cycle. It is advised to get any notes, wish lists, etc... together and ready for discussion.
February 1 to April 30 (89 to 90 calendar days)	<b>Publication cycle begins February 1.</b>  During this time General Staff and TRACOM Staff will review the manuals and begin making any necessary changes.
May 1 to June 30 (61 calendar days)	General Staff and TRACOM Staff will forward any and all changes to the manuals, to the G-3 Publications Officer by May 1. Changes to the manuals will be accepted up to May 15. After May 15 any changes will have to wait until the next publication cycle.  During this time, the G-3 Publications Officer must be working on the manuals bringing them up to date with any revisions and corrections that have been submitted.
July 1 to July 31 (31 calendar days)	Draft manuals will be turned in to DANT/DEPDANT and COTRACOM/DCOTRACOM on July 1. Changes to manuals should be made by DANT/DEPDANT and COTRACOM/DCOTRACOM as soon as possible and then sent to G-3 Publications Officer for inclusion. By July 31 all manuals should be ready for release.
August 1	<b>Publication cycle ends August 1.</b>  All manuals must be finished by the G-3 Publications Officer and be ready for release at this time. No further changes will be made to the manuals at this time.
August 2 to December 31 (152 calendar days)	No direct changes to the manuals will be made during this time unless absolutely necessary.  Because information changes rapidly there may be Addendums and Errata released during this time period. See Section 5 - Policies, for more information regarding Addendums and Errata.

Please note that along with changes to manuals for legal reasons new manual additions can occur at anytime during the year. After their introduction, they will fall into the normal revision cycle.

## Section 4 - Manual Color Codes

For years the SFMC and SFMCA manuals either did not have a cover or had the same cover but with variations so subtle that it would be hard to tell the difference between them. To solve this problem a color-coding system was instituted so that just by looking at the cover of the publications one could tell which manual is which. Below is a chart, which lists the manuals with their corresponding cover color. Please note that the colors of the manuals can change, and that additions to this list can occur at any time.

<b>SFMC Manual Color Codes</b>	
Manual	Cover Color
Arms and Equipment Manual	White to Black Gradient
Marine Force Manual	Blue-Grey
MOS Manual	Light Green
Organization Manual	Orange
Policy Manual	Red
Publications Manual	Dark Blue
SFMC Enlisted Manual	Silver
SFMC Officers Manual	Gold
TRACOM Manual	White
Youth Manual	Teal
All TRACOM Manuals	Light Grey

## Section 5 – Policies

Part of standardizing the manual creation and publication process requires that a set of policies be implemented. This section of the manual deals with those policies. Please note that these policies are subject to change at any time. If you have any questions regarding the policies laid out in this section please contact the SFMC G-3 Publications Officer.

### 5.01 – Text

#### 5.01.1 The Manual Text

The manual text must be written in individual files separated by section. This means that each section of the manual will be a separate file. This is done to facilitate the transition to the final file format. A table of contents is not to be made, nor are pages to be numbered. A table of contents will be made by the G-3 Officer. Page numbering will also be completed by the G-3 Officer.

#### 5.01.2 Reference Sources

Because the SFMC believes in giving credit where credit is due, any text that comes from an outside source should be given credit in the manual. For the purposes of the general SFMC and SFMCA manuals this should take the form of a simple bibliography. The bibliography should follow the Modern Language Association (<http://www.mla.org>) format for bibliographies. For more information please visit the following site: <http://www.aresearchguide.com/12biblio.html>. This site covers the different bibliographic entries using the MLA style for various sources. Below are two examples of bibliographic entries using the MLA format.

**For encyclopedic web sites:**

“Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC).” Britannica Concise Encyclopedia. 2005.  
Encyclopedia Britannica.  
8 Oct. 2005 <<http://concise.britannica.com/ebc/article?eu=402567>>.

**For books:**

Rowling, J.K. Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets. New York: Scholastic, 1999.

The SFMC also recognizes that some manuals may have dozens of references and listing them all would take some considerable time as well as take up a good amount of space in the manuals themselves. Therefore for the general SFMC and SFMCA manuals should list a maximum of five (5) sources for references. More may be added at the discretion of the author, but no more than twelve (12) sources should be listed. Even though the number of sources listed will be limited in the manual, it is recommended that the author of the manual keep a more complete list.

Some manuals may use sources that can no longer be found. Usually this happens when material was taken from a web site that no longer exists. If this is the case the manual author simply needs to make that known when submitting their manual (i.e. Hey I couldn't find the sites the information was taken from so I don't have any sources cited.). For those manuals in which this is the case, the references section will contain the following note:

*This manual contains information drawn from a number of sources, some of which can no longer be found and/or no longer exist. All effort has been made to locate these sources and has failed to do so. The SFMC does not claim copyright on any information taken from these sources.*

#### 5.01.3 Plagiarism

There are only so many ways that one can word certain sentences, but even so plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism puts the Corps in a position where it could be sued for copyright violations. To prevent this, all material must either be cited or rewritten so that it does not resemble the original source while keeping the original intent and information.

If it becomes apparent that sections of a manual have been plagiarized, the author will be asked to rewrite those sections.

### 5.01.4 Formatting

All text must be formatted according to the proper formatting for the particular use of the manual. See Section 6 - Formatting, for the actual formatting to be used. If the manual is a Branch Manual to be used by TRACOM, it must follow the TRACOM formatting style. If the manual is to be a general SFMC manual then it must follow the general SFMC formatting style. No exceptions will be made. Any manual that does not conform to the proper formatting style will be returned to the author for correction. If there is a question as to the proper formatting please contact the G-3 Publication Officer.

### 5.01.5 Acceptable File Formats

Only the following formats will be accepted for manual submissions; Microsoft Word Compatible (.doc) and Rich Text File (.rtf). These formats allow for both text formatting and inserted pictures. Both these files can be produced by Windows Wordpad, Microsoft Word, and OpenOffice (A free full functioning office suite that can be found at [www.openoffice.org](http://www.openoffice.org)). Plain text (.txt) files will be accepted but only if a .doc or .rtf file cannot be submitted. Files in other formats will not be accepted and will be returned to the author so that it may be converted to one of the acceptable formats.

## 5.02 - Spelling and Grammar

Spelling and grammar are extremely important. By using correct spelling and grammar an image of professionalism is created, not to mention that the manual is easier to read. It also lends credibility to the manual and shows that a lot of time went into producing, the manual. Therefore all manuals should be checked for spelling and grammar. While using a word processors spelling and grammar check is quick and easy, it should not be the only way that a manual is checked. The manual should be printed out and read line-by-line, page-by-page, preferably by someone who did not have anything to do with the writing of the manual. This way a fresh perspective is brought in and increases the chances of errors being caught.

Some errors will slip through and may be caught when the manual is being readied for publication. In that instance the necessary corrections will be made. If however the errors are of such a nature that it would take an inordinate amount of time for the G-3 Publications Officer to complete, the manual will be returned to the individual who wrote it for correction.

If spelling and/or grammar errors are discovered after a manual has been published then the individual who discovered the error should make note of the following and notify the G-3 Publications Officer;

1. The manual in which the error occurs (Please make sure it is the current edition)
2. The section and sub-section.
3. The page number.
4. Where on the page the error occurs.
5. The word as it is spelled for spelling mistakes or the phrase/paragraph the grammatical error occurs for any grammatical errors.
6. Changes to correct the error.

If any one of these items is missing the correction will be sent back to the individual. Only complete error reports will be accepted.

## 5.03 - Illustrations

### 5.03.1 Reference Sources

When discussing the SFMC manuals, an illustration is a device that is used to present your written information visually. These include pictures, charts, diagrams, etc. All effort should be made to limit the use of illustrations that are found on the Internet or in other Star Trek related publications. If illustrations from an outside source are used and the source is known make note of the artist or company in the illustrations' caption. For example, a manual shows a screen capture of a Romulan War Bird. The caption could possibly read, "A Romulan War Bird on patrol. (Photo courtesy CBS)". If the source of an illustration is not known then nothing needs to be done. For example, a manual shows a screen capture of a Romulan War Bird. The caption could possibly read, "A Romulan War Bird on patrol."

### 5.03.2 Acceptable File Formats

All illustrations that are photographic or technical in nature must be accompanied by a caption that explains what the picture is illustrating. Charts, diagrams and other such illustrations may have a caption, but as long as those illustrations are referred to in the main body of text it is not necessary to do so.

Illustrations with their corresponding captions may be included in the section text of the manual, but the original files must be included when submitting the document. Please see Section 5.5 – Submissions for more information on this topic.

Illustrations that are photographic or technical in nature must be submitted in one of the following formats; BMP, High quality JPG, PNG, Corel Draw, Adobe Illustrator, or Adobe Photoshop. GIF files will be accepted but are not preferred. If a format is not listed please contact the G-3 Publications Officer to see if a particular format is acceptable.

### 5.04 - Submissions

All submissions are to be made according to the Publication Timeline as outlined in Section 3.

#### 5.04.1 By Authors

As stated earlier in this section the authors will submit the following to either the General Staff or TRACOM;

1. Manual Text: The manual text shall be submitted in multiple word document files, one section per file. The manual text may contain all the necessary illustrations. The text shall have been checked for spelling and grammatical errors. The text shall also contain the proper citations for both illustrations and text. If the manual contains numerous spelling and grammatical errors and/or does not contain the proper citations then the manual will be returned to the author for corrections.
2. Illustrations: Any illustration that is pictorial in nature shall be submitted in one of the approved file formats. Illustrations may be included in the word document files, but as noted in this section they also need to be submitted separately.

#### 5.04.2 By General Staff and TRACOM

This sub-section only applies to what the General Staff and TRACOM are to submit to the G-3 Publications Officer. The GS and/or TRACOM will submit the following to the G-3;

1. Manual Text: The GS and/or TRACOM will submit to the G-3 all necessary corrected word files that have been supplied by the author.
2. Illustrations: The GS and/or TRACOM will submit to the G-3 all necessary illustration files that have been supplied by the author.

#### 5.04.3 By the G-3 Publications Officer

This sub-section only applies to what the G-3 Publications Officer submits to either the GS and/or COTRACOM. The G-3 Publications Officer shall submit to either the General Staff and/or TRACOM the following;

1. One copy of the completed manual in electronic format, specifically Adobe Acrobat format. This file will contain a cover, the manual text, and internal bookmarks to the various sections. This file will also be saved in a way, as to allow backwards compatibility with Adobe Acrobat 3.x..

### 5.05 - Approvals

All manual approvals shall come from either the GS or COTRACOM, this will of course depend on whether the manual is destined for use in TRACOM or as a general SFMC manual. After the various submissions occur, the GS and/or COTRACOM should review the manuals for any errors and whether or not it meets the needs and goals set out at the beginning of the project. If the manual meets the criteria set forth in this manual, and meets the satisfaction of the GS and/or COTRACOM, then the manual should be approved.

Approvals shall be completed within the publication timeline, unless it is a special case, such as a change for legal reasons or the creation of a new manual.

### 5.06 - Publication

Once a manual is approved it shall be “published” or released to the Corps at large. This may be done through either compact discs, websites, or both. The method will be up to the GS. All manuals, per the publication timeline shall be revised and published once a year at the STARFLEET International Convention (IC). As the date of the IC varies from year to year, it is important that the publication timeline be adjusted to compensate for this.

Inevitably special circumstances will arise. Two of the foreseen circumstances are changes to a manual for legal reasons and the introduction of a new manual. In the case of the manual be it a changed for legal reasons the changes will be made as soon as possible, followed by its publication. Then latter during the normal review and publication timeline, the planned updates will take place. This would mean that the manual would be published twice that year.

However, at the discretion of the GS and/or COTRACOM, the manual may be revised, per any planned revisions, that were to be performed later that year. If this course of action is taken, then the manual would forego any revisions during the normal cycle and any revisions would have to wait until the next cycle. This would mean that a manual would be published once that year.

Another special circumstance would be the creation of a new manual. If the creation of a new manual takes place out of the normal cycle, then that manual would not be updated during that year. A manual produced out of the normal cycle can be held at the discretion of the GS and/or COTRACOM till that years IC. No revisions will be made to a new manual until the next cycle, unless changes need to be made for legal reasons.

### **5.06.1 Other Special Circumstances**

Occasionally there might be special circumstances, other than those listed above, which necessitate the publication of a manual more than once a year. Those instances will be handled on case-by-case basis at the discretion of the DANT/DEPDANT and/or COTRACOM.

### **5.06.2 Addendums and Errata**

Addendums and errata are additions and corrections made to the manuals after they have been published. This will not be a full-blown publication or republication of the manuals but will only consist of any number of pages that is necessary to add or correct information currently in the manuals.

#### **5.06.2.2 Schedule**

Addendums and errata will be published at anytime, throughout the months of August to December, on an as needed basis. Addendums and errata will not be published at anytime during the annual manual revision cycle.

#### **5.06.2.3 Format**

Addendums and errata will follow the same basic formatting as the manuals in respect to font size, color and style. They will also have the same page frame as the manuals, with the side gutter removed. They will not have a cover, disclaimer sheet, table of contents or "About the SFMCA" page. They will just be pages with text and illustrations.

#### **5.06.2.4 Inclusion in the Manuals**

All addendums and errata will be folded into the manuals either at the time the addendums and errata are published or during the annual revision cycle. This decision will be left to the G-3 Officer as to which approach will work best.

### **5.07 - Backups**

All files pertaining to the manuals, for both general SFMC and TRACOM use, shall be backed up at regular intervals on non-volatile media (CDs, DVDs). These backups shall be maintained by the G-3 and at the request of the General Staff SFMC, shall provide proof that such measures are being taken as to safeguard the files. Periodically the GS may request one copy of the backup files on either CD or DVD. The GS shall provide a mailing address to which the G-3 shall mail them via special courier or certified mail.

### **5.08 - SFMC Property**

As stated in the SFMC Policy Manual all materials created on the behalf of the SFMC become the property of the SFMC. Therefore, at the end of the G-3's term in office all files pertaining to the SFMC manuals shall be transferred to a non-volatile media format (CDs, DVDs) then sent via special courier or certified mail to the DEPDANT. The G-3 however, shall keep the files for a period of no more than one year, unless so ordered by the GS.

## Section 6 – Formatting

A large part of standardizing the SFMC and SFMCA manuals was to establish a common formatting so that there was little or no difference in the look and feel of the manuals. At the time of this manual's publishing, there are two different yet compatible formats in use in the SFMC. One is used exclusively in the TRACOM manuals and the other is used for all general SFMC manuals. This section outlines the basic formatting that is to be used when writing a manual for the SFMC.

### 6.01 A Tale of Two Formats

As stated above there are two different formatting styles currently in use. This came about because up until the year 2006, TRACOM published their own manuals, while the General Staff published the SFMC General Manuals, such as the MFM. As a result, the two groups generated manuals with different formatting schemes. In 2005, an attempt was made to standardize the two and make the two look similar, but since the G-3 didn't come on board until the beginning of 2009 there were slight variations in font styles, look, feel, etc... After the G-3 started working on the TRACOM manuals, the decision was made to not change what TRACOM was doing since a few manuals had already been produced and changing the formatting mid-project would not look good in the end.

Even though there are two formatting schemes the day may come when all the manuals are changed to either one or the other.

### 6.02 SFMC General Manual Formatting

This section addresses the font formatting used in the SFMC General Manuals. Please note that all paragraphs are to be set for full justify. Also note that the Federation font style is a special style and is available upon request.

Table of Contents				
Description	Font Style	Variation	Size	Color
Title	Federation	Bold	14 pt	Red
Section Title	Federation	Bold	12 pt	Red
Sub-section	Federation	Bold	8 pt	Black
Sub-sub-section	Federation	Regular	8 pt	Black

Manual Text				
Description	Font Style	Variation	Size	Color
Section Title	Federation	Bold	14 pt	Red
Sub-section	Federation	Bold	10 pt	Red
Sub-sub-section	Federation	Bold	9 pt	Red
Sub-sub-sub-section	Federation	Bold Italic	9 pt	Black
Body Text	Aria	Regular	9 pt	Black
Note/Caption Text	Aira	Regular	6 pt	Black

#### 6.02.1 Section Numbering

In the general SFMC manuals each main section or part of the manual is given a number. Each sub-section thereafter adds a .X after the main section number. Below is the system that is to be used for general SFMC Manuals. **Please note that this only applies to general SFMC Manuals.**

**For main sections the format to follow will be:** SECTION X - <Section Title>

**Sub-sections will follow the format:** X.X <Section Title>

**Sub-sub-sections will follow the format:** X.X.X <Section Title>

**Sub-sub-sub-sections will follow the format:** X.X.X.X <Section Title>

#### 6.02.2 Side Gutter

The SFMC Manual template has a main text area offset by a large gutter area. This area is meant for special notes or other such items that the author would like to pull out of the main text to emphasize.

#### Instructions for Authors:

**These instructions apply to authors only!** If the author wishes to utilize this area you may place the note you wish to appear there in the proper place in the text, but change the color to red. This will signify that you wish that text to appear in the gutter note area.

**Instructions for G-3:**

**These instructions apply to the G-3 Officer only!** The text formatting should be as listed above in Section 6.2. This text should be placed inside a red box with rounded corners directly adjacent to the text to which it pertains. The red box itself should be just big enough to fit the text and centered in the gutter.

**6.03 SFMCA Manual Formatting**

This section addresses the font formatting used in the SFMCA Manuals. Please note that all paragraphs are to be set for full justify.

<b>Table of Contents</b>				
<b>Description</b>	<b>Font Style</b>	<b>Variation</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Color</b>
<b>Title</b>	Verdana	Bold	18 pt	Black
<b>Section Title</b>	Verdana	Bold	12 pt	Black
<b>Sub-section</b>	Verdana	Bold	8 pt	Black
<b>Sub-sub-section</b>	Verdana	Regular	8 pt	Black

<b>Manual Text</b>				
<b>Description</b>	<b>Font Style</b>	<b>Variation</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Color</b>
<b>Section Title</b>	Verdana	Bold	24 pt	Black
<b>Sub-section</b>	Verdana	Bold	16 pt	Black
<b>Sub-sub-section</b>	Verdana	Bold	10 pt	Black
<b>Body Text</b>	Verdana	Regular	10 pt	Black
<b>Caption Text</b>	Verdana	Regular	8 pt	Black

**6.03.1 Section Numbering**

In the TRACOM manuals each main section or part of the manual is given a number. The sub-sections thereafter **DO NOT** receive a sub-section number. Below is the system that is to be used for TRACOM Manuals. Please note that this only applies to TRACOM Manuals.

**For main sections the format to follow will be:** Part X - <Section Title>

**6.03.2 Side Gutter**

The SFMC Manual template has a main text area offset by a large gutter area. This area is meant for special notes or other such items that the author would like to pull out of the main text to emphasize.

**Instructions for Authors:**

**These instructions apply to authors only!** If the author wishes to utilize this area you may place the note you wish to appear there in the proper place in the text, but change the color to red. This will signify that you wish that text to appear in the gutter note area.

**Instructions for G-3:**

**These instructions apply to the G-3 Officer only!** The text formatting should be as listed above in Section 6.2. This text should be placed inside a red box with rounded corners directly adjacent to the text to which it pertains. The red box itself should be just big enough to fit the text and centered in the gutter.

**6.04 The SFMC Page Template**

Currently the SFMC page template is an Adobe InDesign file and is maintained by the G-3 Officer. The template will not be released to any party unless so directed by the DANT and/or DEPDANT.

## Section 7 – Writing A Manual

One of the most time consuming and complicated publications that can be produced is a manual. Spelling, grammar and facts have to be checked and rechecked. Then there is laying everything out. Not everything will go according to plan. But hopefully this section will help anyone who is thinking about producing a manual.

### 7.01 - Deciding On A Topic

The first step in writing a manual is deciding on a topic. Sometimes that is easy since the topic has been assigned either through a position or job function. But other times it is totally up to the author what the manual will be about. While the authors have wide discretion as to the topic of the manual it is advisable that the chosen topic covers some aspect of the SFMC.

Even though it is not required, manual topics should be run past the General Staff to make sure that a similar manual is not in the pipeline at some stage. The same should be done for TRACOM manuals. This helps cut down on the duplication of effort.

### 7.02 - Outline

After a topic is chosen the next step is to outline the manual. The outline will serve as a loose framework to which to build the manual around. For the most part, the outline should be of the main points the manual will cover.

### 7.03 - Research

Doing research for a manual can be tedious and time consuming but it needs to be done. There are many references available in print and on the Internet, that can help authors conduct the research needed. Authors should keep good records as to where certain bits of information were gathered from, as well as where various illustrations came from. This is vitally important. Collecting this information while conducting the research prevents others from having to track down the information for themselves, not only that, it will allow proper credit to be given to those that require it.

### 7.04 - Writing the Manual

With the research done it now becomes time to actually sit down and write the manual. This can actually be the hardest part of the whole process. It involves taking all the research that was gathered, breaking it down and then reconstituting it. Not everyone finds this process to be an easy one, but luckily with groups as large and diverse as STARFLEET and the SFMC there are people who will be able to help would-be authors. For policies regarding the actual written text of a manual please see Section 5 – Policies, for more in-depth information.

When writing a manual there are several things the author needs to be aware of;

1. **The audience:** While the manuals tend to be geared toward the membership of the SFMC, one needs to be aware that non-SFMC individuals also read them. So STARFLEET and SFMC acronyms and abbreviations should be kept to a minimum. That is unless they are first spelled out. Also, remember that while a good majority of STARFLEET and the SFMC has an advanced education, there is a large segment that does not. Therefore, the author needs to write the manual at an appropriate grade level. Manuals should be written at an 8<sup>th</sup> grade level but at no higher than a 12<sup>th</sup> grade level.
2. **Spelling and Grammar:** As discussed in the Policy Section of this manual, both spelling and grammar are extremely important. Spelling and grammar should at least be checked by a word processors' spelling and grammar check features, but by no means should that be the only check performed. While the computer may be able to suggest good alternatives and fixes, it tends not to make the best changes. To do that takes a human reading the manual. So it is advisable that once completed, the manual be printed out so that someone can proofread it.

If there is a question as to the proper grammar there are many sources available both in print and on the Internet, which can help the author decide on the proper grammar to be used.

3. **Arrangement:** Another large part in writing a good manual is the arrangement of the sections. Section arrangement can either make a manual unbearable and confusing or easy to read and understandable. An author has to pay particular attention to the way in which the sections are

arranged. For instance, it would be confusing to have a section about weaponry followed by a section on uniforms only to be have that section followed by another one focusing on weapons. It would be much better to combine the weapons sections and place them either before or after the section dealing with uniforms. Not only does it keep related topics together it also allows the reader to mentally keep track of where things are in the manual. Check out the other SFMC and SFMCA manuals for examples of sectional arrangement.

### **7.05 - Illustrations**

Illustrations while not as important as the actual text, can be very helpful and useful. Not everyone can read a paragraph and form the appropriate image in their heads, and this is where illustrations step in. Illustrations help translate the written word into a visual image that can be more easily understood. Illustrations also add visual interest to the manual, so placing appropriate images in sections can make a manual more pleasing to look at. But remember, not everything needs to be illustrated, only pick ones that illustrate key points or complex ideas. For policies regarding illustrations please see Section 5 – Policies, for more in-depth information.

### **7.06 - Submissions**

After the manual is in a rough draft format it should be submitted to the proper individuals for them to look over. Comments will be made at this point in time. Do not be surprised if the manual comes back with a lot of comments. It may take several submissions to get a good final working draft that can be then passed onto the next stage of the publishing process. For policies regarding submissions please see Section 5 – Policies for more information.

### **7.07 - Putting It All Together**

Once the manual is approved as a final working draft it is then passed onto the G-3 Officer. At this stage the G-3 Officer will take all the text and illustrations and incorporate them into the SFMC manual template. It is at this stage the cover is created and a color code for the manual chosen. It is also at this stage that the table of contents is put together. After all the elements are brought together it is published to an Adobe Acrobat File and readied for a final submission.

### **7.08 - The Final Submission**

After the G-3 Officer produces the Adobe Acrobat File the manual is considered ready to be released. But before it is released to the SFMC at large, the manual receives one last look through by the OIC in charge (COTRACOM, DANT/DEPDANT, etc..).

However, there have been times when a manual at this stage is returned because there are still errors, or more information needed to be included into the manual. When this happens the manual is returned to the G-3 Officer who then makes the necessary changes and then resubmits the manual.

### **7.09 - Publication**

Once the manual is deemed ready for publication several things happen. First, the manual is forwarded onto INFOCOM and the SFMC website is updated. Secondly the G-3 Officer updates the SFMC Publication web site and updates the SFMC Documents Compendium CD. Once all the updates have been done, an announcement is usually made on the SFMC and STARFLEET discussion lists alerting the membership to new manuals. This announcement is usually made by the DANT.

## About the SFMC Academy

The Starfleet Marine Corps Academy was established by Commander Starfleet in 2164 when it was determined that Starfleet Academy could no longer adequately meet the needs of both services. The historical home of the United States' Navy and Marine Corps academies, Annapolis, was selected as the new home of the SFMCA. The head of the Academy, known as DCO-Academy, TRACOM, is still headquartered at the main campus in Annapolis. The motto of the SFMCA is "Facta Non Verba" or, in Federation Standard, "Deeds not Words." This is reflected in the more informal academy slogan, "We lead by example... whether we mean to or not." The DCO-Academy, TRACOM reports to the Commanding Officer of the Training Command (COTRACOM) who, in addition to the SFMCA, oversees branch schools, enlisted personnel training, advanced technical schools, and periodic skill re-fresher courses. Most of these courses are held either at one of the SFMCA facilities, or at one of the many training facilities in the New Valley Forge system which is home to TRACOM. These facilities, together with an Oberth-class spacedock serving as TRACOM headquarters, comprise Station Valley Forge. Today, the SFMCA consists of 5 campuses, 8 training worlds, and 42 ranges and field courses throughout the UFP. Together with Station Valley Forge, the SFMCA comprises one of the largest and most advanced military training organizations in the known universe.

