

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

COMMAND ELEMENT
13th MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT
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From: Commanding Officer

Subj: PHONE MESSAGE #9 (3 minutes)

Hello family and friends of 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit. My name is Colonel David Coffman and I am the Commanding Officer of the 13th MEU. Today is the 27th of July, the 200th day of our deployment aboard the Boxer Amphibious Ready Group.

We had a terrific stop in Hawaii last week, with all three of our ships in port for at least a few days. It was great to be back in the United States! The Marines looked fabulous manning the rails for honors to the Arizona Memorial as we sailed out of Pearl Harbor. What an awesome privilege to be part of the naval tradition of our nation and what a wonderful feeling to have finished our work on this deployment and be heading east towards home.

We will arrive off the coast of southern California by Thursday afternoon the 30th of July, where our AV-8B Harrier jets will be the first to fly off Boxer as they make the flight to their home in Yuma Arizona. We are all set for our general off-load by air and surface craft into Camp Pendleton and Miramar Air Station on Friday the 31st of July. This is the last major event of the deployment and it will take us all day to get all of our aircraft, ground weapons systems, and other vehicles and equipment off the ships. Mr. Bryan Vaughn and the rest of our Family Support Team have the details on where and when you can greet the Marines as they return to home stations. I encourage you to come out and welcome these terrific young Americans who have served so well on this deployment. The ships will be returning to San Diego on Saturday morning the 1st of August.

Beyond that, your Marine has the guidance on liberty and leave for August and beyond and I am sure you are working on your vacation plans and other parts of your own "Return and Reunion Program." This period has its own challenges as we re-connect with family and get back into our garrison routine. Please be patient as your Marine makes this adjustment back to life at home, it's a lot different than what we have been doing for the last seven months!

We'll be celebrating our return and the successes of this deployment at a special "welcome home beach bash" on Friday 14 August. Hope to see you there! After that, we will be releasing our subordinate units by the end of August and entering our "off-season" phase as we close out this edition of 13th MEU.

Thanks again for your terrific support to the 13th MEU over the past year. See you soon!