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**TALKING PAPER
ON
HOW TO SUPPORT MUSLIM PERSONNEL**

- Since the events of 9-11, there may need to be a concerted effort to raise Muslim morale.
 - Treat American Muslims as assets rather than suspects. Respect individual Muslims.
 - Publicize a healthy understanding of the faith to correct false stereotyping.
 - Eliminate harassment (i.e., e-mails poking fun) and insensitive remarks (i.e., “kill them all”).
 - Foster awareness of and compassion for stresses 9-11 places on Muslim families (i.e., vandalism).
 - Embrace differences. Encourage unit tolerance for differences.
- Support religious accommodation (when possible):
 - Allot sufficient time and a clean private space for prayer.
 - Ensure Services accommodates dietary restrictions (pork and pork by-products), or support a BAS request. Appropriate MREs must be available at deployments. Sailors/Marines should not carry their own.
 - Recognize modest dress requirements: long sleeves for women year ‘round; a kufi (men’s skull cap); and a khimer (woman’s head covering). Unit safety or mission requirements must come first.
 - Provide liberal leave for holy days.
- Ensure worship opportunities:
 - Make sure chaplains are modeling religious toleration and cooperation, as well as equal opportunity.
 - A great deal of diversity exists in the U.S with no centralized authorities/clergymen (i.e., women may lead prayers in some groups.) Thus, chaplains need to determine each airman’s individual practice.
- Support funeral and burial requirements:
 - Burial should take place as soon after death as possible, before decomposition begins. The body must not be changed (i.e., cremation, autopsy, or embalming) unless required by law. Embalming is permitted in situations where the body cannot be buried immediately.
 - A short prayer should be said for the deceased. It is appropriate to send flowers after a funeral, offer assistance to the bereaved and share brief and tasteful words of condolences. Some families will hold gatherings offering food and drink to visitors during a three day period.
- Be aware of marriage agreement:

- Marriage is not a sacrament but a simple legal agreement. Divorces are discouraged - but allowed.
- The women is seen as an individual in her own right, with the right to own and dispose of her property and earnings.