

PT trash talk brings Air Force video down

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The Marine Corps moved fast to silence an Air Force military training instructor who boasted in a service-sponsored recruiting video that airmen are in better shape than Marines.

On the same day the top enlisted Marine complained about the video, his Air Force counterpart yanked the clip.

Looking directly at the camera, the unidentified airman explained how airmen who graduate basic military training are "in better shape than most Marines."

A link to the video — posted on the Air Force's recruiting Web site, www.airforce.com — was forwarded in an e-mail across the Marine Corps, even reaching Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Carlton Kent.

"I had numerous e-mails from privates first class through senior staff [non-commissioned officers] questioning the intent of this video.

You have to understand, Marines are very proud; and they view statements like the ones in the video as an attack and will defend the honor of our Corps at all costs," Kent said in a statement released to Marine Corps Times on Oct. 15, the day the clip came down.

Kent immediately sent his own e-mail to his Air Force counterpart, Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James Roy. He complained about the PT trash talk and asked Roy to take down the video.

Roy watched the video and agreed with Kent's assessment. Down came the clip.

"Once [Roy] saw the video, he felt the only right thing to do was to have it taken down," said Master Sgt. Adam Stump, an Air Force spokesman.

The 60-second video shows recruits sweating through an early-morning physical training session at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, the service's only location for enlisted basic training.

"The biggest misconception is that the Air Force is the easier of the four services, when actually, we are the hardest when it comes to PT standards. Our standards are higher, and we don't have the 12 to 16 weeks to get them there

like the Army and Marines do," the training instructor explains.

The Air Force Recruiting Service removed the video "until the validity of the fitness standards comment can be verified," said spokeswoman Christa D'Andrea. It also will be edited to remove the military training instructor's last comment, which is "a personal opinion of the basic military training instructor and was in no way intended to disparage Marines."

All airmen should be proud of what they do for their country, but the video goes too far, Kent said.

"Each service is entitled to present itself to the public in its own way," he said. "But the video in question features a pretty bold claim, one that Marines — and many others who are aware of what it takes to be a Marine — will take offense to."

Asked for comment, a spokesman for Marine Corps Recruiting Command offered a brief analysis.

"Imitation is the best form of flattery," Maj. Chris Devine said. "We are proud that the Air Force referred to the Marine Corps as the model of physical fitness to which its men and women can aspire to emulate." □