

STATEMENT OF

GENERAL JAMES T. CONWAY
COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

BEFORE

THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE

THE POSTURE OF THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

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General James T. Conway **Commandant of the Marine Corps**



General Conway was born in Walnut Ridge, Arkansas and is a graduate of Southeast Missouri State University. He was commissioned in 1970 as an infantry officer. His company grade assignments included multiple platoon and company commander billets with both the 1st and 2nd Marine Divisions; Executive Officer of the Marine Detachment aboard the USS *Kitty Hawk* (CVA-63); series and company commander at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego; aide to the Commanding General, and Director, Sea School.

As a field grade officer, he commanded two companies of officer students and taught tactics at The Basic School; he also served as operations officer for the 31st Marine Amphibious Unit to include contingency operations off Beirut, Lebanon; and as Senior Aide to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. Promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, he was reassigned to the 2d Marine Division as Division G-3 Operations Officer.

He commanded Battalion Landing Team 3/2 during Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM. Selected for colonel, he served as the Ground Colonels' Monitor, and as Commanding Officer of The Basic School. His general officer duties included Deputy Director of Operations, J-34, Combating Terrorism, Joint Staff, Washington, D.C.; and President, Marine Corps University at Quantico, Virginia. After promotion to Major General, he assumed command of the 1st Marine Division. In November 2002, Major General Conway was promoted to Lieutenant General and assumed command of the I Marine Expeditionary Force. During 2003-2004, he commanded I Marine Expeditionary Force through two combat tours in Iraq. In late 2004, he was reassigned as the Director of Operations, J-3, Joint Staff, in Washington, D.C.

General Conway graduated with honors from The Basic School, the U.S. Army Infantry Officers' Advanced Course, the Marine Corps Command and Staff College and the Air War College.

Introduction

Chairman Murtha, Congressman Young, and distinguished Members of the Committee; my pledge to you remains the same — to always provide my forthright and honest assessment of your Marine Corps. The following pages detail my assessment of the current state of our Corps and my vision for its future.

First and foremost, on behalf of all Marines, I extend deep appreciation for your magnificent support of the Marine Corps and our families — especially those warriors currently engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan. Extremists started this war just over 25 years ago in Beirut, Lebanon. Since then, our country has been attacked and surprised repeatedly, at home and abroad, by murderers following an extreme and violent ideology. I am convinced, given the chance, they will continue to kill innocent Americans at every opportunity. Make no mistake, your Marines are honored and committed to stand between this great Nation and any enemy today and in the future. Whether through soft or hard power, we will continue to fight the enemy on their land, in their safe havens, or wherever they choose to hide.

A selfless generation, today's Marines have raised the bar in sacrifice and quality. They know they will repeatedly go into harm's way, and despite this, they have joined and reenlisted at exceptional rates. Exceeding both the Department of Defense and our own high school graduate standards, more than 96 percent of our enlistees in Fiscal Year 2008 had earned their high school diploma. Furthermore, based on a recent study from the Center for Naval Analyses, we are also retaining higher quality Marines.

The success in Al Anbar directly relates to the quality of our Marines. Several years ago, few would have thought that the conditions we see in Al Anbar today were possible, but rotation after rotation of Marines, Sailors, Soldiers, and Airmen practiced patience, perseverance, and trigger control until the Sunni leadership realized that we were not the enemy. Now, the vast majority of our actions in Al Anbar deal with political and economic issues — the Corps looks forward to successfully completing our part in this initial battle of the Long War.

However, our Marines are professionals and understand there is still much work to be done. As we increase our strength in Afghanistan, Marines and their families are resolved to answer their Nation's call. There are many challenges and hardships that lie ahead, but our Marines embrace the chance to make a difference. For that, we owe them the full resources required to complete the tasks ahead — to fight today's battles, prepare for tomorrow's challenges, and fulfill our commitment to our Marine families.

Our Marines and Sailors in combat remain my number one priority. The resiliency of our Marines is absolutely amazing. Their performance this past year in Iraq and Afghanistan has been magnificent, and we could not be more proud of their willingness to serve our great Nation at such a critical time. Our concerns are with our families; they are the brittle part of the equation, yet through it all, they have continued to support their loved ones with the quiet strength for which we are so grateful.

To fulfill the Marine Corps' commitment to the defense of this Nation, and always mindful of the sacrifices of our Marines and their families that make it possible, our priorities will remain steadfast. These priorities will guide the Corps through the battles of today and the certain challenges and crises in our Nation's future. Our budget request is designed to support the following priorities:

- **Right-size the Marine Corps for today's conflict and tomorrow's uncertainty**
- **Reset the force and prepare for the next contingency**
- **Modernize for tomorrow to be "the most ready when the Nation is least ready"**
- **Provide our Nation a naval force fully prepared for employment as a Marine Air Ground Task Force across the spectrum of conflict**
- **Take care of our Marines and their families**
- **Posture the Marine Corps for the future**

Your support is critical as we continue to reset the force for today and adapt for tomorrow. As prudent stewards of the Nation's resources, we are committed to providing the American taxpayer the largest return on investment. The future is uncertain and invariably full of surprises, but continued support by Congress will ensure a balanced Marine Corps — increasingly agile and capable — ready to meet the needs of our Nation and a broadening set of missions. From humanitarian assistance to large-scale conventional operations, your Marines have never failed this great Nation, and thanks to your steadfast support, they never will.

Our Marines and Sailors in Combat

Our Corps' most sacred resource is the individual Marine. It is imperative to the long-term success of the institution that we keep their well being as our number one priority. Over the past several years, sustained deployments in Iraq, Afghanistan, and across the globe have kept many Marines and Sailors in the operating forces deployed as much as they have been at home station. They have shouldered our Nation's burden and done so with amazing resiliency. Marines understand what is required of the Nation's elite warrior class — to stand up and be counted when the Nation needs them the most. For this, we owe them our unending gratitude.

Marines and their families know that their sacrifices are making a difference, that they are part of something much larger than themselves, and that their Nation stands behind them. Thanks to the continued support of Congress, your Marines will stay resolved to fight and defeat any foe today or in the future.

USMC Operational Commitments

The Marine Corps is fully engaged in a generational, multi-faceted Long War that cannot be won in one battle, in one country, or by one method. Our commitment to the Long War is characterized by campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as diverse and persistent engagements around the globe. As of 6 May 2009, there are more than 25,000 Marines deployed to the U.S. Central Command's Area of Responsibility in support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF) and ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF). The vast majority are in Iraq; however, we are in the process of drawing down those forces and increasing the number of Marines in Afghanistan.

In Afghanistan, we face an enemy and operating environment that is different than that in Iraq. We are adapting accordingly. Nearly 5,700 Marines are deployed to various regions throughout Afghanistan — either as part of Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF) – Afghanistan, 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade, Marine Special Operations Companies, Embedded Training Teams, or Individual Augments and those numbers will grow substantially. The Embedded Training Teams live and work with the Afghan National Army and continue to increase the Afghan National Army’s capabilities as they grow capacity. Other missions outside Afghanistan are primarily in the broader Middle East area, with nearly 2,800 Marines, to include the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit.

While we recognize the heavy demand in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Marine Corps is very conscious of the need for deployed forces throughout the rest of the globe. As of 6 May 2009, there are roughly 2,800 Marines deployed in the U.S. Pacific Command’s Area of Responsibility alone, to include the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit and a 62-man detachment in the Philippines. More than 100 Marines are deployed in support of Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa in Djibouti. Additionally, the Marine Corps has participated in more than 200 Theater Security Cooperation events, ranging from small mobile training teams to MAGTF exercises in Latin America, Africa, Eastern Europe, and the Pacific.

Right-size the Marine Corps

The needs of a nation at war demanded the growth of our active component by 27,000 Marines. We have had great success and will reach our goal of 202,000 Marines during Fiscal Year 2009 — more than two years earlier than originally forecasted. Solid planning and your continued support will ensure we meet the training, infrastructure, and equipment requirements resulting from this growth. This growth will significantly improve the ability of your Corps to train to the full range of military operations. It will also increase our capacity to deploy forces in response to contingencies and to support security cooperation with our partners, ultimately reducing operational risk and posturing the Corps for continued success in the future.

Before we were funded to grow our force, we were forced into an almost singular focus on preparing units for future rotations and counterinsurgency operations. This narrowed focus and the intense deployment rate of many units weakened our ability to maintain traditional skills, such as amphibious operations, combined-arms maneuver, and mountain warfare. Congressionally-mandated to be “the most ready when the Nation is least ready,” this growth is an essential factor to improve our current deployment-to-dwell ratio and allow our Corps to maintain the sophisticated skills-sets required for today and the future.

In Fiscal Year 2008, we activated another infantry battalion and increased capacity in our artillery, reconnaissance, engineer, military police, civil affairs, intelligence, and multiple other key units that have seen a significantly high deployment tempo. With your continued support, we will continue to build capacity according to our planned growth.

Improving the deployment-to-dwell ratio for our operating forces will also reduce stress on our Marines and their families. Achieving our goal of a 1:2 deployment-to-dwell ratio for active duty and a 1:5 ratio for Reserves is crucial to the health of our force and our families during this Long War. Our peacetime goal for active duty remains a 1:3 deployment-to-dwell ratio.

Achieving and Sustaining a Marine Corps of 202,000

The Marine Corps grew by more than 12,000 Marines in Fiscal Year 2008 and is on pace to reach an active duty end strength of 202,000 by the end of Fiscal Year 2009 — more than two years ahead of schedule. We attribute our accelerated growth to four factors: quality recruiting, exceptional retention levels, reduced attrition, and — not least — an incredible generation of young Americans who welcome the opportunity to fight for their country. Our standards remain high, and we are currently ahead of our Fiscal Year 2009 goal in first term enlistments and are on track with our career reenlistments. Attrition levels are projected to remain at or below Fiscal Year 2008 rates.

Recruiting

Recruiting is the strategic first step in making Marines and growing the Corps. With first-term enlistments accounting for more than 70 percent of our end strength increase, our recruiting efforts must not only focus on our overall growth, but also on attracting young men and women with the right character, commitment, and drive to become Marines.

We continue to exceed Department of Defense quality standards and recruit the best of America into our ranks. The Marine Corps achieved over 100 percent of the Active Component accession goal for both officer and enlisted in Fiscal Year 2008. We also achieved 100 percent of our Reserve component recruiting goals.

Retention

Retention is a vital complement to recruiting and an indicator of the resiliency of our force. In Fiscal Year 2008, the Marine Corps achieved an unprecedented number of reenlistments with both the First Term and Career Force. We established the most aggressive retention goals in our history, and our achievement was exceptional. Our 16,696 reenlistments equated to a first-term retention rate of almost 36 percent and a Career Marine retention rate of 77 percent. Through 17 March 2009:

- 7,453 first-term Marines reenlisted, meeting 101.6 percent of our goal. This represents the fastest attainment of a fiscal year first-term reenlistment goal in our history and equates to a retention rate of 31.4 percent retention rate; traditional reenlistments average 6,000 or a retention rate of 24 percent.
- 7,329 Marines who have completed at least two enlistment contracts chose to reenlist again. This number represents 98.2 percent of our goal of 7,464 reenlistments, and a 72.2 percent retention rate among the eligible population.

Our retention success may be attributed to several important enduring themes. First, Marines are motivated to “stay Marine” because they are doing what they signed up to do — fighting for and protecting our Nation. Second, they understand that the Marine Corps culture is one that rewards proven performance. Third, our reenlistment incentives are designed to retain top quality Marines with the most relevant skill sets. The continued support of Congress will ensure continued success.

The Marine Corps Reserve

Our Reserves continue to make essential contributions to our Total Force efforts in The Long War, particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan. As we accelerated our build to 202,000 Active Component Marines, we understood that we would take some risk in regards to obtaining our Reserve Component end strength of 39,600. During the 202,000 build-up, we adjusted our accession plans and encouraged our experienced and combat-tested Reserve Marines to transition back to active duty in support of these efforts. They responded in force, and as a result, we came in under our authorized Reserve Component end strength limit by 2,077. As a Total Force Marine Corps, we rely heavily upon the essential augmentation and reinforcement provided by our Reserve Marines. We believe our authorized end strength of 39,600 is appropriate and provides us with the Marines we require to support the force and to achieve our goal of a 1:5 deployment-to-dwell ratio. With the achievement of the 202,000 active duty force, we will refocus our recruiting and retention efforts to achieve our authorized Reserve Component end strength. The bonus and incentives provided by Congress, specifically the authorization to reimburse travel expenses to select members attending drill, will be key tools in helping us accomplish this goal.

Infrastructure

The Marine Corps remains on track with installation development in support of our personnel growth. With the continued support of Congress, we will ensure sufficient temporary facilities or other solutions are in place until permanent construction can be completed.

Military Construction: Bachelor Housing

Due to previous fiscal constraints, the Marine Corps has routinely focused on critical operational concerns, and therefore we have not built barracks. With your support, we have recently been able to expand our construction efforts and have established a program that will provide adequate bachelor housing for our entire force by 2014. Additional support is required for our Fiscal Year 2010 program to provide 3,000 new barracks spaces and meet our 2014 goal. We are also committed to funding the replacement of barracks' furnishings on a seven-year cycle as well as the repair and maintenance of existing barracks to improve the quality of life of our Marines.

We are constructing our barracks to a two-person room configuration and assigning our junior personnel (pay grades E1-E3) at two Marines per room. We are a young Service; the majority of our junior Marines are 18-21 years old, and assigning them at two per room helps assimilate them into the Marine Corps culture, while fostering camaraderie and building unit cohesion. As Marines progress to noncommissioned officer rank and take on the added responsibilities of corporal (E4) and sergeant (E5), our intent is to assign them one per room.

Public Private Venture (PPV) Housing

The Marine Corps supports the privatization of family housing. To date, the Public Private Venture (PPV) program has been a success story. We have benefited from the construction of quality homes and community support facilities, as well the vast improvement in maintenance services. PPV has had a positive impact on the quality of life for our Marines and families. The feedback we have received has been overwhelmingly positive.

PPV has been integral to accommodating existing requirements and the additional family housing requirements associated with the growth of our force. By the end of Fiscal Year 2007, with the support of Congress, the Marine Corps privatized 96 percent of its worldwide family housing inventory. By the end of Fiscal Year 2010, we expect to complete our plan to privatize 97 percent of our existing worldwide family housing inventory.

We again thank the Congress for its generous support in this area. In Fiscal Years 2008 and 2009, you provided the funding to construct or acquire nearly 3,000 additional homes and two related Department of Defense Dependent Schools through this program; and by 2014, PPV will result in all of our families being able to vacate inadequate family housing.

Reset the Force

Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have placed an unprecedented demand on ground weapons systems, aviation assets, and support equipment. These assets have experienced accelerated wear and tear due to the harsh operating environments and have far exceeded the planned peacetime usage rates. Additionally, many equipment items have been destroyed or damaged beyond economical repair. High rates of degraded material condition require the Marine Corps to undergo significant equipment reset for our operational forces and our prepositioning programs. Reset will involve all actions required to repair, replace, or modernize the equipment and weapons systems that will ensure the Nation's expeditionary force in readiness is well prepared for future missions. We appreciate the generous support of Congress to ensure that Marines have the equipment and maintenance resources they need to meet mission requirements. It is our pledge to be good stewards of the resources you so generously provide.

Reset Costs

Costs categorized as "reset" meet one of the following criteria: maintenance and supply activities that restore and enhance combat capability to unit and prepositioned equipment; replace or repair equipment destroyed, damaged, stressed, or worn out beyond economic repair; or enhance capabilities, where applicable, with the most up-to-date technology.

Congressional support has been outstanding. Thus far, you have provided more than \$12 billion toward reset. We thank you for this funding; it will help ensure that Marines have the equipment they need to properly train for and conduct combat operations.

Equipment Readiness

Sustained operations have subjected our equipment to more than a lifetime's worth of wear and tear stemming from mileage, operating hours, and harsh environmental conditions. The additional weight associated with armor plating further exacerbates the challenge of maintaining high equipment readiness. Current Marine Corps policy dictates that as forces rotate in and out of theater, their equipment remains in place. This policy action was accompanied by an increased maintenance presence in theater and has paid great dividends as our deployed ground force readiness remains above 90 percent. While we have witnessed a decrease in supply readiness rates for home station units, the delivery of supplemental procurements is beginning to bear fruit and we expect our readiness rates in supply to rise steadily.

Aviation Equipment and Readiness

Marine Corps Aviation supports our Marines in combat today while continuing to plan for crisis and contingency operations of tomorrow. Our legacy aircraft are aging, and we face the challenge of maintaining current airframes that have been subjected to heavy use in harsh, austere environments while we transition to new aircraft. Our aircraft have been flying at rates well above those for which they were designed; however, despite the challenge of operating in two theaters, our maintenance and support personnel have sustained a 74.5 percent aviation mission-capable rate for all Marine aircraft over the past 12 months. We must continue to overuse these aging airplanes in harsh environments as we transition forces from Iraq to Afghanistan.

To maintain sufficient numbers of aircraft in squadrons deployed overseas, our non-deployed squadrons have taken significant cuts in available aircraft and parts. Reset and supplemental funding have partially alleviated this strain, but we need steady funding for our legacy airframes as age, attrition, and wartime losses take their toll on our aircraft inventory.

Prepositioning Programs

Comprised of three Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadrons (MPSRON) and other strategic reserves, the Marine Corps' prepositioning programs are a critical part of our ability to respond to current and future contingency operations and mitigate risk for the Nation. Each MPSRON, when married with a fly in echelon, provides the equipment and sustainment of a 17,000 man Marine Expeditionary Brigade for employment across the full range of military operations. Withdrawal of equipment from our strategic programs has been a key element in supporting combat operations, growth of the Marine Corps, and other operational priorities. Generous support from the Congress has enabled long-term equipment solutions, and as a result, shortfalls within our strategic programs will be reset as equipment becomes available from industry.

Maritime Prepositioning Squadrons (MPSRON)

Our MPSRONs will be reset with the most capable equipment possible, and we have begun loading them with capabilities that support lower spectrum operations while still maintaining the ability to generate Marine Expeditionary Brigades capable of conducting major combat operations. The MPSRONs are currently rotating through Maritime Prepositioning Force Maintenance Cycle-9. MPSRON-1 completed MPF Maintenance Cycle-9 in September 2008 and is currently at 86 percent of its full equipment set. As I addressed in my 2008 report,

equipment from MPSRON-1 was required to outfit new units standing up in Fiscal Year 2007 and Fiscal Year 2008 as part of our end strength increase to 202,000. MPSRON-1 is expected to be fully reset at the completion of its next maintenance cycle in 2011.

MPSRON-2 is currently undergoing its rotation through MPF Maintenance Cycle-9. Equipment from MPSRON-2 was offloaded to support Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and much of that equipment remains committed to forward operations today. With projected deliveries from industry, MPSRON-2 will complete MPF Maintenance Cycle-9 in June 2009 with approximately 90 percent of its planned equipment set. Our intent is to finish the reset of MPSRON-2 when it completes MPF Maintenance Cycle-10 in fiscal year 2012. MPSRON-3 was reset to 100 percent of its equipment set during MPF Maintenance Cycle-8 in March 2007 and remains fully capable.

We are currently in the process of replacing the aging, leased vessels in the Maritime Prepositioning Force with newer, larger, and more flexible government owned ships from the Military Sealift Command fleet. Two decades of equipment growth and recent armor initiatives have strained the capability and capacity of our present fleet — that was designed to lift a Naval Force developed in the early 1980s. As we reset MPF, these changes are necessary to ensure we incorporate hard fought lessons from recent combat operations.

Five of the original thirteen, leased Maritime Prepositioning Ships will be returned to Military Sealift Command by July 2009. In their place, we are integrating three of Military Sealift Command's nineteen large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ships (LMSR), a fuel tanker and a container ship into the MPF Program. One LMSR was integrated in September 2008 and two more are planned for January 2010 and January 2011. The fuel tanker and container ship will be incorporated in June 2009. These vessels will significantly expand MPF's capacity and flexibility and will allow us to reset and optimize to meet current and emerging requirements. When paired with our amphibious ships and landing craft, the LMSRs provide us with platforms from which we can develop advanced seabasing doctrine and tactics, techniques, and procedures for utilization by the Maritime Prepositioning Force (Future) program.

Marine Corps Prepositioning Program: Norway

The Marine Corps Prepositioning Program – Norway (MCPN) was also used to source equipment in support of current operations in both Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom and to provide humanitarian assistance in Georgia. The Marine Corps continues to reset MCPN in accordance with our operational priorities while also exploring other locations for geographic prepositioning that will enable combat and theater security cooperation operations in support of forward deployed Naval Forces.

Modernize for Tomorrow

Surprise is inevitable; however, its potentially disastrous effects can be mitigated by a well-trained, well-equipped, and disciplined force — always prepared for the crises that will arise. To that end and taking into account the changing security environment and hard lessons learned from seven years of combat, the Marine Corps recently completed an initial review of its Operating Forces' ground equipment requirements. Recognizing that our unit Tables of Equipment (T/E) did not reflect the challenges and realities of the 21st century battlefield, the Corps adopted new T/Es for our operating units. This review was synchronized with our modernization plans and programs, and provided for enhanced mobility, lethality, sustainment,

and command and control across the MAGTF. They reflect the capabilities required not only for the Corps' current mission, but for its future employment across the range of military operations, against a variety of threats, and in diverse terrain and conditions. The MAGTF T/E review is an integral part of the critical work being done to reset, reconstitute, and revitalize the Marine Corps.

Additionally, we recently published the *Marine Corps Vision and Strategy 2025*, which guides our development efforts over the next two decades. Programs such as the Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle and the Joint Strike Fighter are critical to our future preparedness. Congressionally-mandated to be "the most ready when the Nation is least ready," your multi-capable Corps will be where the Nation needs us, when the Nation needs us, and will prevail over whatever challenge we face.

Urgent Needs Process

The Marine Corps Urgent Needs Process synchronizes abbreviated requirements, resourcing, and acquisition processes in order to distribute mission-critical warfighting capabilities on accelerated timelines. Operating forces use the Urgent Universal Need Statement to identify mission-critical capability gaps and request interim warfighting solutions to these gaps. Subject to statutes and regulations, the abbreviated process is optimized for speed and involves a certain degree of risk with regard to doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities integration and sustainment, along with other deliberate process considerations. A Web-based system expedites processing; enables stakeholder visibility and collaboration from submission through resolution; and automates staff action, documentation, and approval. This Web-based system is one of a series of process improvements that, reduced average time from receipt through Marine Requirements Oversight Council decision from 142 days (December 2005 through October 2006) to 85 days (November 2006 through October 2008).

Enhancing Individual Survivability

We are providing Marines the latest in Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) — such as the Scalable Plate Carrier, Modular Tactical Vest, Lightweight Helmet, and Flame Resistant Organizational Gear (FROG). The Scalable Plate Carrier features a smaller area of coverage to reduce weight, bulk, and heat load for operations at higher elevations like those encountered in Afghanistan. Coupled with the Modular Tactical Vest, the Scalable Plate Carrier provides commanders options to address various mission/threat requirements. Both vests use Enhanced Small Arms Protective Inserts (E-SAPI) and Side SAPI plates and provide the best protection available against a wide variety of small arms threats — including 7.62 mm ammunition.

The current Lightweight Helmet provides a high degree of protection against fragmentation threats and 9 mm bullets, and we continue to challenge industry to develop a lightweight helmet that will stop the 7.62 mm round. The lifesaving ensemble of Flame-Resistant Organizational Gear (FROG) clothing items help to mitigate potential heat and flame injuries to our Marines from improvised explosive devices.

We are also upgrading our Counter Radio-controlled Electronic Warfare (CREW) systems to meet evolving threats. Our Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) equipment has been

reconfigured and modernized to be used with CREW systems and has provided EOD technicians the capability of remotely disabling IEDs.

Marine Aviation Plan

The Fiscal Year 2009 Marine Aviation Plan provides the way ahead for Marine Aviation through Fiscal Year 2018, with the ultimate long-range goal of fielding an all-short-takeoff/vertical landing aviation force by 2025. We will continue to transition from our 12 legacy aircraft models to six new airframes and expand from 64 to 69 flying squadrons while adding 565 officers and more than 4,400 enlisted Marines.

Joint Strike Fighter (JSF)

The F-35 Lightning II, Joint Strike Fighter, will provide the Marine Corps with an affordable, stealthy, high performance, multi-role jet aircraft to operate in the expeditionary campaigns of the future. The JSF acquisition program was developed using the concept of cost as an independent variable (CAIV), which demands affordability, aggressive management, and preservation of the warfighting requirement. The F-35B's cutting edge technology and STOVL design offer greater safety, reliability, and lethality than today's tactical aircraft.

This aircraft will be the centerpiece of Marine Aviation. Our program of record is to procure 420 aircraft (F-35B, STOVL). Our first flight of the STOVL variant was conducted in the summer of 2008, and the manufacture of the first 19 test aircraft is well under way, with assembly times better than planned. We will reach initial operational capability in 2012, with a standing squadron ready to deploy.

MV-22 Osprey

The MV-22 is the vanguard of revolutionary assault support capability and is currently replacing our aged CH-46E aircraft. In September 2005, the MV-22 Defense Acquisition Board approved Full Rate Production, and MV-22 Initial Operational Capability was declared on 1 June 2007, with a planned transition of two CH-46E squadrons per year thereafter. We have 90 operational aircraft, a quarter of our planned total of 360. These airframes are based at Marine Corps Air Station New River, North Carolina; and Pawtuxet River, Maryland. Recently, we welcomed back our third MV-22 squadron from combat. By the end of Fiscal Year 2009, we will have one MV-22 Fleet Replacement Training Squadron, one test squadron, and six tactical VMM squadrons.

The MV-22 program uses a block strategy in its procurement. Block A aircraft are training aircraft and Block B are operational aircraft. Block C aircraft are operational aircraft with mission enhancements that will be procured in Fiscal Year 2010 and delivered in Fiscal Year 2012.

Teaming with Special Operations Command, we are currently on contract with BAE systems for the integration and fielding of a 7.62mm, all aspect, crew served, belly mounted weapon system that will provide an enhanced defensive suppressive fire capability. Pending successful developmental and operational testing we expect to begin fielding limited numbers of this system later in 2009.

This aircraft, which can fly higher, faster, farther, and longer than the CH-46, provides dramatically improved support to the MAGTF and our Marines in combat. On deployments, the MV-22 is delivering Marines to and from the battlefield faster, ultimately saving lives with its speed and range. Operating from Al Asad, the MV-22 can cover the entire country of Iraq. The Marine Corps asked for a transformational assault support aircraft — and Congress answered.

KC-130J Hercules

The KC-130J Hercules is the workhorse of Marine aviation, providing state-of-the-art, multi-mission capabilities; tactical aerial refueling; and fixed-wing assault support. KC-130Js have been deployed in support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM and are in heavy use around the world.

The success of the aerial-refuelable MV-22 in combat is tied to the KC-130J, its primary refueler. The forced retirement of the legacy KC-130F/R aircraft due to corrosion, fatigue life, and parts obsolescence requires an accelerated procurement of the KC-130J. In addition, the Marine Corps will replace its 28 reserve component KC-130T aircraft with KC-130Js, simplifying the force to one Type/Model/Series. The Marine Corps is continuing to plan for a total of 79 aircraft, of which 34 have been delivered.

In response to urgent requests from Marines currently engaged in combat in Afghanistan, additional capabilities are being rapidly fielded utilizing existing platforms and proven systems to enhance intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) as well as fire support capability. The ISR / Weapon Mission Kit being developed for use onboard the KC-130J will enable the MAGTF commander to take advantage of the Hercules' extended endurance to provide persistent over-watch of ground units in a low-threat environment. A targeting sensor coupled with a 30mm cannon, Hellfire missiles, and/or standoff precision guided munitions will provide ISR coverage with a sting. Additionally, this added capability will not restrict or limit the refueling capability of the KC-130J. The USMC is rapidly pursuing fielding of the first two kits to support operations in Afghanistan in 2009.

H-1 Upgrade

The H-1 Upgrade Program (UH-1Y/AH-1Z) resolves existing operational UH-1N power margin and AH-1W aircrew workload issues while significantly enhancing the tactical capability, operational effectiveness, and sustainability of our attack and utility helicopter fleet. Our Vietnam-era UH-1N Hueys are reaching the end of their useful life. Due to airframe and engine fatigue, Hueys routinely take off at their maximum gross weight with no margin for error. Rapidly fielding the UH-1Y remains a Marine Corps aviation priority and was the driving force behind the decision to focus on UH-1Y fielding ahead of the AH-1Z. Three UH-1Ys deployed aboard ship with a Marine Expeditionary Unit in January of 2009.

Twenty production H-1 aircraft (14 Yankee and six Zulu) have been delivered. Operation and Evaluation Phase II commenced in February 2008, and as expected, showcased the strengths of the upgraded aircraft. Full rate production of the UH-1Y was approved during the fourth quarter Fiscal Year 2008 at the Defense Acquisition Board (DAB) with additional Low Rate Initial Production (LRIP) aircraft approved to support the scheduled fleet introduction of the AH-1Z in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2011.

CH-53K

The CH-53K is a critical ship-to-objective maneuver and seabasing enabler; it will replace our CH-53E, which has been fulfilling our heavy lift requirements for over 20 years. The CH-53K will be able to transport 27,000 pounds externally to a range of 110 nautical miles, more than doubling the CH-53E lift capability under similar environmental conditions while maintaining the same shipboard footprint. Maintainability and reliability enhancements of the CH-53K will significantly decrease recurring operating costs and will radically improve aircraft efficiency and operational effectiveness over the current CH-53E. Additionally, survivability and force protection enhancements will dramatically increase protection for aircrew and passengers; thereby broadening the depth and breadth of heavy lift operational support to the joint task force commander. Initial Operational Capability for the CH-53K is scheduled for Fiscal Year 2015. Until then, we will upgrade and maintain our inventory of CH-53Es to provide heavy lift capability in support of our warfighters.

Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS)

When fully fielded, the Corps' Unmanned Aerial Systems will be networked through a robust and interoperable command and control system that provides commanders an enhanced capability applicable across the spectrum of military operations. Revolutionary systems, such as those built into the Joint Strike Fighter, will mesh with these UAS to give a complete, integrated picture of the battlefield to ground commanders.

Our Marine Expeditionary Forces have transitioned our Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadrons (VMU) to the RQ-7B Shadow; reorganized the squadrons' force structure to support detachment-based flexibility (operating three systems versus one for each squadron); and are preparing to stand up our fourth active component VMU squadron. The addition of a fourth VMU squadron is critical to sustaining operations by decreasing our deployment-to-dwell ratio — currently at 1:1 — to a sustainable 1:2 ratio. This rapid transition and reorganization, begun in January 2007, will be complete by the middle of Fiscal Year 2010.

In Iraq and Afghanistan, the Marine Corps is currently using an ISR Services contract to provide Scan Eagle systems to our forces, but we anticipate fielding Small Tactical UAS (STUAS), a combined Marine Corps and Navy program, in Fiscal Year 2011 to fill that void at the regiment and Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) level. In support of battalion-and-below operations, the Marine Corps is transitioning from the Dragon Eye to the joint Raven-B program.

Airborne Electronic Attack (AEA)

The EA-6B remains the premier electronic warfare platform within the Department of Defense. The Marine Corps is fully committed to the Prowler. While the Prowler continues to maintain a high deployment tempo, supporting operations against new and diverse irregular warfare threats, ongoing structural improvements and the planned Improved Capabilities III upgrades will enable us to extend the aircraft's service life through 2018.

Beyond the Prowler, the future of electronic warfare for the Marine Corps will be comprised of a networked system-of-systems. The constituent components of this network include the F-35B Joint Strike Fighter, Unmanned Aerial Systems, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance pods and payloads, the Next Generation Jammer (NGJ), and ground systems already fielded or

under development. Our future vision is to use the entire array of electronic warfare capabilities accessible as part of the distributed electronic warfare network. This critical and important distinction promises to make Marine Corps electronic warfare capabilities accessible, available, and applicable to all MAGTF and joint force commanders.

Ground Tactical Mobility Strategy

The Army and Marine Corps are leading the Services in developing the right tactical wheeled vehicle fleets for the joint force. Through a combination of resetting and replacing current systems and developing several new vehicles, our work will provide the joint force with vehicles of appropriate expeditionary mobility, protection level, payload, transportability, and sustainability. As we develop new vehicles, it is imperative that our ground tactical vehicles provide adequate protection while still being sized appropriately for an expeditionary force.

Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle (EFV)

The EFV is the cornerstone of the Nation's forcible entry capability and the Marine Corps is in a period of critical risk until the EFV is fielded. Based on current and future threats, amphibious operations must be conducted from over the horizon and at least 25 nautical miles at sea. The EFV is the sole sea-based, surface oriented vehicle that can project combat power from the assault echelon over the horizon to the objective. EFVs are specifically suited to maneuver operations from the sea and sustained operations ashore. It will replace the aging Assault Amphibious Vehicle, which has been in service since 1972. Complementary to our modernized fleet of tactical vehicles, the EFV's amphibious mobility, day and night lethality, enhanced force protection capabilities, and robust communications will substantially improve joint force capabilities.

During the program's Nunn-McCurdy restructure in June 2007, the EFV was certified to Congress as *essential to National security*. EFV System Development and Demonstration was extended four and a half years to allow for design reliability. The EFV program successfully released a Critical Design Review in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2009 during a capstone event that assessed the EFV design as mature with a predicted reliability estimate of 61 hours mean time between operational mission failures greatly exceeding the exit criteria of 43.5 hours. These improvements will be demonstrated during the Developmental Test and Operational Test phases starting second quarter Fiscal Year 2010 on the seven new EFV prototypes currently being manufactured at the Joint Services Manufacturing Center in Lima, Ohio. The Low Rate Initial Production decision is programmed for Fiscal Year 2012. The current acquisition objective is to produce 573 EFVs. Initial Operational Capability is scheduled for 2015 and Full Operational Capability is scheduled for 2025.

Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) Vehicles

The Marine Corps is executing this joint urgent requirement to provide as many highly survivable vehicles to theater as quickly as possible. In November 2008, the Joint Requirements Oversight Council established a new 16,238-vehicle requirement for all Services and SOCOM. The current Marine Corps requirement of 2,627 vehicles supports our in-theater operations and home station training and was satisfied in June 2008. We are currently developing modifications that will provide for greater off-road mobility and utility in an Afghan environment in those vehicles that have been procured.

Vehicle Armoring

The evolving threat environment requires proactive management of tactical wheeled vehicle programs in order to provide Marine warfighters with the most well protected, safest vehicles possible given technological limitations. Force protection has always been a priority for the Marine Corps. We have fielded a Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacement (MTVR) Armor System for the MTVR; Fragmentation Armor Kits for the High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV); Marine Armor Kits (MAK) armor for the Logistics Vehicle System (LVS); and the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles. We have developed increased force protection upgrades to the MTVR Armor System, safety upgrades for the HMMWVs, and are developing improved armor for the Logistics Vehicle System. We will continue to work with the Science & Technology community and with our sister Services to develop and apply technology as required to address force protection. Congressional support for our force protection efforts has been overwhelming, and we ask that Congress continue their life-saving support in the coming years.

Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) Fires

In 2007, we initiated “The MAGTF Fires Study.” This study examined the current organic fire support of the MAGTF to determine the adequacy, integration, and modernization requirements for ground, aviation, and naval surface fires. The study concluded that the MAGTF/Amphibious Task Force did not possess an adequate capability to engage moving armored targets and to achieve a volume of fires in all weather conditions around the clock. This deficiency is especially acute during Joint Forcible Entry Operations. We are currently conducting a study with the Navy to analyze alternatives for meeting our need for naval surface fires during this phase. Additionally, we performed a supplemental historical study using Operation IRAQI FREEDOM data to examine MAGTF Fires across the range of military operations. These studies reconfirmed the requirement for a mix of air, naval surface, and ground-based fires as well as the development of the Triad of Ground Indirect Fires.

Triad of Ground Indirect Fires

The Triad of Ground Indirect Fires provides for complementary, discriminating, and non-discriminating fires that facilitate maneuver during combat operations. The Triad requires three distinct systems to address varying range and volume requirements. Offering improved capabilities and mobility, the M777 is a medium-caliber artillery piece that is currently replacing the heavy and aged M198 Howitzer. The High Mobility Artillery Rocket System is an extended range, ground-based rocket capability that provides precision and volume fires. The Expeditionary Fire Support System (EFSS) is a towed 120mm mortar. It will be the principal indirect fire support system for heli-borne and tilt rotor-borne forces executing Ship-to-Objective Maneuver. When paired with an Internally Transportable Vehicle, the EFSS can be transported aboard MV-22 Osprey and CH-53E aircraft. EFSS-equipped units will have immediately responsive, organic indirect fires at ranges beyond those of current infantry battalion mortars. Initial operational capability is planned in 2009 with full operational capability expected for Fiscal Year 2012.

Naval Surface Fire Support

In the last year, the Naval Services have focused on reinvigorating our strategy for building naval surface fire support capable of engaging targets at ranges consistent with our Ship-to-Objective Maneuver concept. In March 2008, the Extended Range Guided Munition development effort, which was designed to provide naval gunfire at ranges up to 53 nautical miles, was cancelled due to numerous technical and design flaws. The DDG-1000 program, which provides for an Advanced Gun System firing the Long Range Land Attack Projectile 70 nautical miles as well as for the Dual Band RADAR counter-fire detection capability, was truncated as priorities shifted to countering an emerging ballistic missile threat. As a result, the Marine Corps and Navy are committed to re-evaluating methods for providing required naval fires.

Aviation Fires

Marine aviation is a critical part of the MAGTF fires capability. The Joint Strike Fighter will upgrade missile and bomb delivery, combining a fifth-generation pilot-aircraft interface, a 360-degree view of the battlefield, and a new generation of more lethal air-delivered ordnance coming online through 2025. Systems, such as Strikelink, will mesh forward air controllers with pilots and infantry officers at all levels. Laser and global positioning systems will provide terminal phase precision to less-accurate legacy bombs, missiles and rockets, providing more-lethal, all-weather aviation fires.

Infantry Weapons

We are also developing infantry weapons systems based on our combat experience and supporting studies. These systems not only support the current fight, but also posture Marines to respond across the full spectrum of war. Our goals include increased lethality and combat effectiveness, reduced weight, improved modularity, and integration with other combat equipment. The Marine Corps and Army are co-leading a joint Service capabilities analysis in support of future developments.

The M16A4 and the M4 carbine are collectively referred to as the Modular Service Weapon. While both weapons have proven effective and reliable in combat operations, we must continually seek ways of improving the weapons with which we equip our warriors. With that in mind, we are re-evaluating current capabilities and determining priorities for a possible future service rifle and pistol.

We are in the process of acquiring the Infantry Automatic Rifle, which is shorter and lighter than the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon and will enable the automatic rifleman to keep pace with the fire team while retaining the capability to deliver accurate and sustained automatic fire in all tactical environments. The Infantry Automatic Rifle will increase the lethality of our rifle squads while reducing logistical burden.

The Marine Corps is also upgrading its aging Shoulder-launched Multipurpose Assault Weapon (SMAW) with a lighter launcher and enhanced targeting and fire control. In concert with this, we are developing a "fire from enclosure" rocket that will enable Marines to fire the SMAW from within a confined space.

Non-lethal Weapons

Our joint forces will continue to operate in complex security environments where unintended casualties and infrastructure damage will work against our strategic goals. Therefore, our warfighters must have the capability to respond using both lethal and non-lethal force. As the Executive Agent for the Department of Defense Non-Lethal Weapons Program, the Marine Corps oversees and supports joint Service operational requirements for non-lethal weapons and their development to meet identified capability gaps. Our efforts extend across the globe, as reflected by the Department of Defense's engagement with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in identifying emerging non-lethal capabilities. Directed-energy technology is proving to hold much promise for the development of longer-range, more effective non-lethal weapons. Non-lethal weapon applications will provide new options for engaging personnel, combating small boat threats, and stopping vehicles, and are critical to our success against today's hybrid threats.

Command and Control

The Marine Corps' Command and Control Harmonization Strategy articulates our goal of delivering seamless support to Marines. We are taking the best of emerging technologies to build an integrated set of capabilities that includes the Common Aviation Command and Control System (CAC2S), Joint Tactical Radio System, Very Small Aperture Terminal, the Combat Operations Center (COC), Joint Tactical COP Workstation, and Blue Force tracking system.

Combat Operations Center (COC)

By 2010, the MAGTF Combat Operations Center capability will integrate air and ground tactical situations into one common picture. The COC program has a current Authorized Acquisition Objective of 260 systems, of which 242 are COCs supporting regimental/group-size and battalion/squadron-size operating forces. As of 1 May 2009, 22 COCs have been deployed overseas in support of units participating in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM; 16 COCs are deployed in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. COC systems will eventually support the warfighter from the Marine Expeditionary Force-level to the company-level and below.

Marine Corps Enterprise Network (MCEN)

The Marine Corps Enterprise Network (MCEN) enables the Marine Corps' warfighters and business domains to interface with joint forces, combatant commands, and the other Services on our classified and unclassified networks.

To meet the growing demands for a modern, networked force, the Marine Corps, as part of a Department of Navy-led effort, is transitioning its Non-Secure Internet Protocol Routing Network (NIPRNET) from the contract owned and contract operated Navy-Marine Corps Intranet (NMCI) to a government owned and government operated Next Generation Enterprise Network (NGEN). This transition will provide the Marine Corps unclassified networks increased security, control, and flexibility.

The Marine Corps continues to invest in the expansion and enhancement of our Secret Internet Protocol Routing Network (SIPRNET) to ensure a highly secure and trusted classified network that meets our operational and intelligence requirements.

The Marine Corps has enhanced its security posture with a defense-in-depth strategy to respond to cyber threats while maintaining network accessibility and responsiveness. This layered approach, aligned with Department of Defense standards, provides the Marine Corps networks that support our warfighting and business operations while protecting the personal information of our Marines, Sailors, and their families.

Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR)

We continue to improve the quality, timeliness, and availability of actionable intelligence through implementation of the Marine Corps Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Enterprise (MCISR-E). This approach incorporates Marine Corps ISR capabilities into a flexible framework that enables us to collect, analyze, and rapidly exchange information necessary to facilitate increased operational tempo and effectiveness. Through development of the Distributed Common Ground System – Marine Corps (DCGS-MC), the enterprise will employ fully integrated systems architecture compliant with joint standards. This will allow our units to take advantage of joint, national, interagency, and coalition resources and capabilities, while making our intelligence and combat information available to the same. MCISR-E will integrate data from our ground and aerial sensors as well as from non-traditional intelligence assets, such as from battlefield video surveillance systems, Joint Strike Fighter sensors, and unit combat reports. This will enhance multi-discipline collection and all-source analytic collaboration. Additionally, MCISR-E will improve interoperability with our command and control systems and facilitate operational reach-back to the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity and other organizations.

Recent growth in intelligence personnel permitted us to establish company-level intelligence cells, equipped with the tools and training to enable every Marine to be an intelligence collector and consumer. This capability has improved small unit combat reporting and enhanced operational effectiveness at all levels. Collectively, these efforts provide an adaptive enterprise that supports Marine Air-Ground Task Force intelligence requirements across the full range of military operations.

Improved Total Life Cycle Management

To assure effective warfighting capabilities, we are improving the Total Life Cycle Management of ground equipment and weapons systems. Overall mission readiness will be enhanced through the integration of the Total Life Cycle Management value stream with clear aligned roles, responsibilities, and relationships that maximize the visibility, supportability, availability, and accountability of ground equipment and weapons systems.

This will be accomplished through the integration of activities across the life cycle of procuring, fielding, sustaining, and disposing of weapon systems and equipment. Some of the expected benefits include:

- “Cradle to grave” material life cycle management capability
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for life cycle management across the enterprise

- Availability of reliable fact-based information for decision making
- Full cost visibility
- Full asset visibility
- Standardized processes and performance metrics across the enterprise
- Improved internal management controls

Water and Energy Conservation

The Marine Corps believes in good stewardship of water and energy resources aboard our installations. In April 2009, we published our *Facilities Energy & Water Management Campaign Plan*, which includes the steps we are taking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and our dependence on foreign oil. In our day-to-day operations and long-term programs, we intend to reduce the rate of energy use in existing facilities, increase energy efficiency in new construction and renovations, expand the use of renewable resources, reduce usage rates of water on our installations, and improve the security and reliability of energy and water systems.

A Naval Force, for Employment as a MAGTF

Your Corps provides the Nation a multi-capable naval force that operates across the full range of military operations. The Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard will soon publish the *Naval Operations Concept 2009 (NOC 09)*. This publication describes how, when, and possibly where U.S. naval forces will prevent conflict — and/or prevail in war — as part of a maritime strategy. In this era of strategic uncertainty, forward deployed naval forces are routinely positioned to support our national interests. The ability to overcome diplomatic, geographic, and anti-access impediments anywhere on the globe is a capability unique to naval forces. Our strategies and concepts address the following requirements: The ability to maintain open and secure sea lines of communication for this maritime nation; the ability to maneuver over and project power from the sea; the ability to work with partner nations and allies to conduct humanitarian relief or non-combatant evacuation operations; and the ability to conduct sustained littoral operations along any coastline in the world. These strategies and concepts highlight the value of naval forces to the Nation and emphasize the value of our Marine Corps-Navy team.

Seabasing

The ability to operate independently from the sea is a core capability of the Navy and Marine Corps. Seabasing is our vision of future joint operations from the sea. Seabasing is the establishment of a port, an airfield, and a replenishment capability at sea through the physical coupling and interconnecting of ships beyond the missile range of the enemy. We believe sea-based logistics, sea-based fire support, and the use of the ocean as a medium for tactical and operational movement will permit our expeditionary forces to move directly from their ships to the objectives — on the shoreline or far inland. From that base at sea — with no footprint ashore — we will be able to conduct the full range of operations, from forcible entry to disaster relief or humanitarian assistance.

Forcible Entry

Naval forces afford the Nation's only sustainable forcible entry capability. Two Marine Expeditionary Brigades (MEBs) constitute the assault echelon of a sea-based Marine Expeditionary Force. Each MEB assault echelon requires 17 amphibious warfare ships —

resulting in an overall ship requirement of 34 operationally available amphibious warfare ships. In order to meet a 34-ship availability rate based on a Chief of Naval Operations approved maintenance factor of 10 percent (not available for deployment), this calls for an inventory of 38 amphibious ships. This amphibious fleet must be composed of not less than 11 amphibious assault ships (LHA/LHD), 11 amphibious transport dock ships (LPD-17 class), and 12 dock landing ships (LSD), with 4 additional amphibious ships, which could be either LPDs or LSDs. This arrangement accepts a degree of risk but is feasible if the assault echelons can be rapidly reinforced by the Maritime Prepositioning Force (future). The Navy and Marine Corps agreed to this requirement for 38 amphibious warfare ships.

LPD-17

The recent deployment of the first of the San Antonio-class amphibious warfare ship demonstrates the Navy's commitment to a modern expeditionary power projection fleet that will enable our naval force to operate across the spectrum of conflict. It is imperative that, at a minimum, 11 of these ships be built to support the 2.0 MEB assault echelon amphibious lift requirement. Procurement of the 10th and 11th LPD remains one of our highest priorities. The Marine Corps recognizes and appreciates the support Congress has provided in meeting the requirement for 11 LPD-17 ships.

To assist the Navy in transitioning to an optimum number and types of common hull forms, the LPD-17 remains the leading candidate for replacing the dock landing ships (LSD). Constructing new amphibious ships based on the incremental refinement of common hull forms will greatly enhance our ability to meet evolving MAGTF lift requirements. Critical to this strategy is the development of a shipbuilding schedule that will provide a smooth transition from legacy ship decommissioning to new ship delivery, minimizing operational risk while driving costs down.

Today and in the future, LPD-17 class ships will play a key role by forward deploying Marines and their equipment to execute global commitments throughout all phases of engagement. The ship's flexible, open-architecture design will facilitate expanded force coverage and decrease reaction times of forward deployed Marine Expeditionary Units. It will also offer the capacity to maintain a robust surface assault and rapid off-load capability in support of combatant commander forward presence and warfighting requirements.

LHA(R)/LH(X)

A holistic amphibious shipbuilding strategy must ensure that our future warfighting capabilities from the sea are fully optimized for both vertical and surface maneuver capabilities. The MV-22 and Joint Strike Fighter, combined with CH-53 K and the UH-1 Y/Z, will provide an unparalleled warfighting capacity for the combatant commanders. Two Amphibious Assault (Replacement) (LHA(R)) ships with enhanced aviation capabilities will replace two of the retiring Amphibious Assault (LHA) class ships and join the eight LHD class amphibious assault ships. The LHA(R) design traded surface warfare capabilities to provide enhanced aviation hangar and maintenance spaces to support aviation maintenance, increase jet fuel storage and aviation ordnance magazines, and increase aviation sortie generation rates.

Operational lessons learned and changes in future operational concepts have caused changes in MAGTF equipment size and weight and have reinforced the requirement for amphibious ships with flexible surface interface capabilities. The Marine Corps remains committed to meeting the

long-standing requirement for simultaneous vertical and surface maneuver capabilities from the seabase. Toward that end, follow-on big deck amphibious ship construction to replace LHAs will incorporate surface interface capabilities while retaining significant aviation enhancements of the LHA Replacement ship.

Maritime Prepositioning Force (Future)

The Maritime Prepositioning Force (Future) (MPF(F)) is a key Seabasing enabler and will build on the success of the legacy Maritime Prepositioning Force program. MPF(F) will provide support to a wide range of military operations, from humanitarian assistance to major combat operations, with improved capabilities such as at-sea arrival and assembly; selective offload of mission sets; persistent, long-term, sea-based sustainment; and at-sea reconstitution. The squadron is designed to provide combatant commanders a highly flexible operational and logistics support capability to meet widely varied expeditionary missions ranging from reinforcing and supporting the assault echelon during Joint Forcible Entry Operations to conducting independent operations throughout the remaining range of military operations. The squadron will preposition a single MEB's critical equipment and sustainment capability for delivery from the sea base without the need for established infrastructure ashore.

The Acting Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps approved MPF(F) squadron capabilities and ship composition in May 2005, as documented in the MPF(F) Report to Congress on 6 June 2005. Those required capabilities and ship composition remain fully valid today in meeting the full range of combatant commander mission requirements. The MPF(F) squadron is designed to be comprised of three aviation-capable ships, three modified Large Medium-Speed Roll-on/roll-off ships (LMSR), three Dry Cargo/Ammunition (T-AKE) supply ships, three Mobile Landing Platforms, and two legacy dense-packed (T-AK) ships.

MPF(F) Aviation Capable Ships: "An Airfield Afloat"

MPF(F) aviation-capable ships are the key Seabasing enablers that set it apart from legacy prepositioning programs. These ships are multifaceted enablers that are vital to the projection of forces from the seabase, offering a new level of operational flexibility and reach. MPF(F) aviation capable ships contain the MEB's command and control nodes as well as medical capabilities, vehicle stowage, and berthing for the MEB. They serve as a base for rotary wing/tilt-rotor aircraft, thus supporting the vertical employment of forces to objectives up to 110 nautical miles from the sea base as well as surface reinforcement via the LHD well deck. These ships allow for the stowage, operation, arming, control, and maintenance of aircraft in the seabase, which directly allows for the vertical and surface employment, projection, and sustainment of forces ashore.

Without these ships, the MPF(F) squadron would have to compensate for the necessary operational capabilities and lift capacities, increasing the number of ships, modifying the remaining platforms in the squadron, and/or accepting significant additional operational risk in areas such as vertical maneuver, command and control, and medical.

Mobile Landing Platform (MLP): “A Pier in the Ocean”

The Mobile Landing Platform (MLP) is perhaps the most flexible platform in the MPF(F) squadron. MLP will provide at-sea vehicle, equipment, and personnel transfer capabilities from the Large Medium Speed Roll-on/Roll-off ship (LMSR) to air-cushioned landing craft via the MLP’s vehicle transfer system currently under development. The MLP also provides organizational and intermediate maintenance that enables the surface employment of combat ready forces from over the horizon. In short, the MLP is a highly flexible, multi-purpose intermodal capability that will be a key interface between wide varieties of seabased platforms. Instead of ships and lighters going to a terminal on shore, they will conduct at-sea transfers of combat-ready personnel, vehicles, and equipment to and from the MPF(F).

Beyond its critical role within the MPF(F) squadron, the MLP also serves as the crucial joint interface platform with other Services and coalition partners. The MLP will possess an enhanced container-handling capability, allowing it to transfer containerized sustainment from military and commercial ships to forces ashore.

Dry Cargo/Ammunition Ship (T-AKE): “A Warehouse Afloat”

The Dry Cargo/Ammunition Ship (T-AKE) is a selectively off-loadable, afloat warehouse ship that is designed to carry dry, frozen, and chilled cargo, ammunition, and limited cargo fuel. It is a versatile supply platform with robust underway replenishment capabilities for both dry and wet cargo that can re-supply other ships in the squadron and ground forces as required. Key holds are reconfigurable for additional flexibility. It has a day/night capable flight deck. The squadron’s three T-AKEs will have sufficient dry cargo and ammunition capacities to provide persistent sustainment to the Marine Expeditionary Brigade operating ashore. The cargo fuel — in excess of a million gallons — will greatly contribute to sustaining the forces ashore. These ships can support the dry cargo and compatible ammunition requirements of joint forces and are the same ship class as the Combat Logistics Force T-AKE ships.

Large Medium-Speed Roll-on/Roll-off (LMSR) Ship: “Assembly at Sea”

A Large Medium Speed Roll on/Roll off ship (LMSR) platform will preposition MEB assets and will enable at-sea arrival and assembly operations and selective offload operations. Expansive vehicle decks and converted cargo holds will provide sufficient capacity to stow the MEB’s vehicles, equipment, and supplies in an accessible configuration. This, combined with selective offload via the MLP’s vehicle transfer system, will permit at-sea arrival and assembly operations within the ship. The LMSR will have sufficient berthing for assembly and integration of MEB personnel and associated vehicles and equipment. LMSR modifications will include two aviation operating spots, underway replenishment equipment, a controlled assembly area, and ordnance magazines and elevators. Specific modifications, such as the side port hatch design and inclusion of anti-roll tanks, will facilitate employing the MLP’s vehicle transfer system with the MPF(F) LMSR during seabased operations. The LMSR will also have dedicated maintenance areas capable of supporting organizational intermediate maintenance activities for all ground combat equipment.

Our Marines and Families

While our deployed Marines never question the need or ability to live in an expeditionary environment and harsh climates, they have reasonable expectations that their living quarters at home station will be clean and comfortable. Those who are married want their families to enjoy quality housing, schools, and family support. It is a moral responsibility for us to support them in these key areas. A quality of life survey we conducted in late 2007 reflected that despite the current high operational tempo, Marines and spouses were satisfied with the support they receive from the Marine Corps. Marines make an enduring commitment to the Corps when they earn the title Marine. In turn, the Corps will continue its commitment to Marines and their families. We extend our sincere appreciation for Congress' commitment to this Nation's wounded warriors and their direction for the establishment of Centers of Excellence within the Department of Defense that address Traumatic Brain Injury, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, eye injuries, hearing loss, and a joint Department of Defense / Department of Veterans Affairs Center addressing loss of limbs.

Family Readiness Programs

Last year, we initiated a multi-year plan of action to put our family support programs on a wartime footing. We listened to our families and heard their concerns. We saw that our commanders needed additional resources, and we identified underfunded programs operating largely on the strength and perseverance of hard-working staff and volunteers.

To address the above concerns, we have established full-time Family Readiness Officer billets in more than 400 units and have also acted to expand the depth and breadth of our family readiness training programs. The Family Readiness Officer is supported in this mission by the Marine Corps Community Services Program. For the families communication with their deployed Marines is their number one quality of life requirement. With the Family Readiness Officer serving as the focal point, we have used information technology tools to expand the communication between Marines and their families.

These initiatives and others demonstrate the commitment of the Marine Corps to our families and underscore the significance of family readiness to mission readiness. We thank Congress for the supplemental funding during Fiscal Years 2008 and 2009 that enabled initial start-up. Beginning in Fiscal Year 2010, the funding required to maintain these critical programs will be part of our baseline budget.

Casualty Assistance

Our casualty assistance program is committed to ensuring that families of our fallen Marines are treated with the utmost compassion, dignity, and honor. We have taken steps to correct the unacceptable deficiencies in our casualty reporting process that were identified in congressional hearings and subsequent internal reviews.

Marine Corps commands now report the initiation, status, and findings of casualty investigations to the Headquarters Casualty Section in Quantico, which has the responsibility to ensure the next of kin receive timely notification of these investigations from their assigned Casualty Assistance Calls Officer.

The Headquarters Casualty Section is a 24-hour-per-day operation manned by Marines trained in casualty reporting, notification, and casualty assistance procedures. These Marines have also taken on the additional responsibility of notifying the next of kin of wounded, injured, and ill Marines.

In October 2008, we implemented a mandatory training program for Casualty Assistance Calls Officers that includes a Web-based capability to expand the reach of the course. This training covers notification procedures, benefits and entitlements, mortuary affairs, and grief and bereavement issues. We will continue to monitor the effectiveness of these changes and make adjustments where warranted.

Wounded Warrior Regiment

The Marine Corps is very proud of the positive and meaningful impact that the Wounded Warrior Regiment is having on wounded, ill, and injured Marines, Sailors, and their families. Just over 18 months ago, we instituted a comprehensive and integrated approach to Wounded Warrior care and unified it under one command. The establishment of the Wounded Warrior Regiment reflects our deep commitment to the welfare of our wounded, ill, and injured, and their families throughout all phases of recovery. Our single process provides active duty, reserve, and separated Marines with non-medical case management, benefit information and assistance, resources and referrals, and transition support. The nerve center of our Wounded Warrior Regiment is our Wounded Warrior Operations Center — where no Marine is turned away.

The Regiment strives to ensure programs and processes adequately meet the needs of our wounded, ill, and injured and that they remain flexible to preclude a one-size-fits-all approach to that care. For example, we have transferred auditing authority for pay and entitlements from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service in Cleveland directly to the Wounded Warrior Regiment, where there is a comprehensive awareness of each wounded Marine's individual situation. We have also designed and implemented a Marine Corps Wounded, Ill, and Injured Tracking System to maintain accountability and case management for the Marine Corps Comprehensive Recovery Plan. To ensure effective family advocacy, we have added Family Readiness Officers at the Regiment and our two battalions to support the families of our wounded, ill, and injured Marines.

While the Marine Corps is aggressively attacking the stigma and lack of information that sometimes prevents Marines from asking for help, we are also proactively reaching out to those Marines and Marine veterans who may need assistance. Our Sergeant Merlin German Wounded Warrior Call Center not only receives calls from active duty and former Marines, but also conducts important outreach calls. In the past year, the Marine Corps added Battalion contact cells that make periodic outreach to Marines who have returned to duty in order to ensure their recovery needs are being addressed and that they receive information on any new benefits. The Call centers between them have made over 40,000 calls to those Marines injured since September 2001 to assess how they are doing and offer our assistance.

To enhance reintegration, our Job Transition Cell, manned by Marines and representatives of the Departments of Labor and Veterans Affairs, has been proactively reaching out to identify and coordinate with employers and job training programs to help our wounded warriors obtain positions in which they are most likely to succeed and enjoy promising careers. One example is

our collaboration with the U.S. House of Representatives to establish their Wounded Warrior Fellowship Program for hiring disabled veterans to work in congressional offices.

The Marine Corps also recognizes that the needs of our wounded, ill, and injured Marines and their families are constantly evolving. We must ensure our wounded Marines and their families are equipped for success in today's environment and in the future.

As we continue to improve the care and management of our Nation's wounded, the Marine Corps is grateful to have the support of Congress. In addition to the support provided in the Fiscal Year 2009 National Defense Authorization Act, I would like to thank you for your personal visits to our Wounded Warriors in the hospital wards where they are recovering and on the bases where they live. The Marine Corps looks forward to continuing to work with Congress in ensuring that our wounded, ill, and injured Marines receive the best care, resources, and opportunities possible.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

With 2,700 new cases of Marines with TBI entered into the Department of Defense and Veteran's Brain Injury Center (DVBIC) in calendar year 2008, we continue to see TBI as a significant challenge that we are confronting. Many of these new cases represent older injuries that are just now being diagnosed, and our expectation is that, with the institution of the Automated Neuropsychological Assessment Metrics (ANAM) for all Marines, we will discover mild Traumatic Brain Injuries more promptly post-deployment. While the Marine Corps is providing leadership and resources to deal with this problem, we cannot solve all the issues on our own.

The Marine Corps continues to work closely with Military Medicine, notably DoD's Center of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury, to advance our understanding of TBI and improve care for all Marines. We are grateful for your continued support in this area.

Psychological Health Care

Marine Corps commanders are fully engaged in promoting the psychological health of our Marines, Sailors, and family members. The message to our Marines is to look out for each other and to know that it is okay to get help. While culture change is hard to measure, we feel that the efforts we have made to reduce the stigma of combat stress are working.

The Marine Corps Combat and Operational Stress Control Program encompasses a set of policies, training, and tools to enable leaders, individuals, and families to prepare for and manage the stress of operational deployment cycles. Our training emphasizes ways in which to recognize stress reactions, injuries, and illnesses early and manage them more effectively within operational units. Our assessments of stress responses and outcomes are rated on a continuum: unaffected; temporarily or mildly affected; more severely impaired but likely to recover; or persistently distressed or disabled. Combat stress deserves the same attention and care as any physical wound of war, and our leaders receive extensive training on how to establish an environment where it is okay to ask for help.

To assist leaders with prevention, rapid identification, and early treatment of combat operational stress, we are expanding our program of embedding mental health professionals in operational

units — the Operational Stress Control and Readiness (OSCAR) program — to provide direct support to all active and reserve ground combat elements. This will be achieved over the next three years through realignment of existing Navy structure supporting the operating forces, and increases in Navy mental health provider inventory. Our ultimate intent is to expand OSCAR to all elements of the Marine Air-Ground Task Force. In the interim, OSCAR teams are filled to the extent possible on an ad hoc basis with assets from Navy Medicine.

Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)

Last year, I reported on our intent to establish a continuum of care for our EFMP families. We are actively helping more than 6,000 families in the Exceptional Family Member Program gain access to medical, educational, and financial care services that may be limited or restricted at certain duty stations. We have assigned case managers to all of our enrolled EFMP families, obtained the help of the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery and TRICARE to resolve health care concerns at several bases, and directed legal counsel to advise the EFMP and our families on state and Federal entitlements and processes. Additionally, we are developing assignment policies that will further facilitate the continuum of care.

While no family should have to endure interruptions in care, gaining access to services can be most challenging to families who have Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). We sincerely appreciate the support of Congress for our ASD families and others who are entitled to the TRICARE Extended Care Health Option (ECHO) program. For Fiscal Year 2009, you have increased the monthly reimbursement rate for Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) — a specific therapy that our Marine families value.

However, there is still more to do. While appropriate TRICARE reimbursement rates are important, the highly specialized services these families require are not always available. We are evaluating how we can partner with other organizations to increase the availability of these specialized services in areas where resources are currently lacking.

Water Contamination at Camp Lejeune

Past water contamination at Camp Lejeune has been, and continues to be, a very important issue for the Marine Corps. Using good science, our goal is to determine whether past exposure to the contaminated water at Camp Lejeune resulted in any adverse health effects for our Marines, their families, or our civilian workers.

The Marine Corps continues to support the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) in their health study, which is estimated to be completed in late 2009. With the help of Congress, the National Academy of Sciences is assisting us in developing a way ahead on this difficult issue.

The Marine Corps continues to make progress notifying former residents and workers. We have established a call center and registry where the public can provide contact information so that we can notify them when these health studies are complete.

Our outreach efforts include a range of communication venues to include letters to individuals located from Department of Defense databases, paid print and broadcast advertising, publications

in military magazines, press releases, and a fully staffed call center. As of 22 March 2009, we have had 131,000 total registrations and mailed more than 200,000 direct notifications.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

Sexual assault is a crime, and we take every reported incident very seriously. The impact on its victims and the corrosive effect on unit and individual readiness are matters of great concern. A recent Government Accountability Office study reported several shortcomings in our program. To address these findings, we are refreshing our training program and assessing the requirement to hire full-time Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program coordinators at installations with large troop populations. We have trained more than 3,200 victim advocates to provide assistance upon the request. All Marines receive sexual assault prevention and awareness training upon entry and are required to receive refresher training at least annually. We have also incorporated sexual assault prevention into officer and noncommissioned officer professional development courses and key senior leader conferences and working groups. At the request of our field commanders, we have also increased the number of Marine Corps judge advocates who attend specialized training on prosecution of these crimes and have assembled a mobile training team to teach our prosecutors how to better manage these cases.

Suicide Prevention

With 42 Marine suicides in 2008, we experienced our highest suicide rate since the start of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. The number of confirmed Marine suicides has increased from 25 in Calendar Year 2006, to 33 in 2007, to 42 in 2008. Through March 2009, we have eight presumed suicides this year, which place us on a trajectory for 32 this calendar year. Our numbers are disturbing; we will not accept them, or stand idle while our Marines and families suffer.

Our studies have found that regardless of duty station, deployment, or duty status, the primary stressors associated with Marine suicides are problems in romantic relationships, physical health, work-related issues such as poor performance and job dissatisfaction, and pending legal or administrative action. This is consistent with other Services and civilian findings. Multiple stressors are usually present in suicide.

In November 2008, we reviewed our suicide awareness and prevention program and directed the development of a leadership training program targeted at noncommissioned officers. As in combat, we will rely upon our corporals and sergeants to chart the course and apply their leadership skills to the challenge at hand. This program includes high-impact, engaging videos, and a web-ready resource library to provide additional tools for identifying their Marines who appear at risk for suicide. Further, during March 2009, we required all of our commanders to conduct suicide prevention training for 100 percent of the Marines under their charge. This training educated Marines on the current situation in our Corps; it taught them how to identify the warning signs; it reinforced their responsibility as leaders; and it informed them of the resources available locally for support.

The Marine Corps will continue to pursue initiatives to prevent suicides, to include reevaluating existing programs designed to reduce the stressors most correlated with suicidal behavior; developing and distributing new prevention programs; and refreshing and expanding training materials.

Child Development Programs

To ensure Children, Youth, and Teen Programs continue to transition to meet the needs of our families, a Functionality Assessment was conducted in June 2008 to identify program improvements, such as the development of staffing models to improve service delivery, as well as recommendations to explore and re-define services to meet the unique and changing needs of Marines and their families living both on and off our installations. In addition, the Marine Corps has expanded partnerships to provide long- and short-term support for geographically dispersed Marines. We can now provide 16 hours of reimbursed respite care per month for families with a deployed Marine. We are expanding our care capacity in many ways, including extended hours as well as through partnerships with Resource and Referral agencies, off-base family childcare, and Child Development Home spaces.

We are currently providing 11,757 childcare spaces and meeting 63.6 percent of the calculated total need. It is important to note that the Marine Corps has initiated rigorous data collection and analysis improvements. As a result, it will be necessary to correct the 2007 annual summary due to identified reporting errors. Our reported rate of 71 percent of potential need last year is more accurately stated as 59.1 percent. We are not satisfied with our progress to date, and have planned for 10 Child Development Center Military Construction projects in Program Years 2008 through 2013. Two of those projects were executed in Fiscal Year 2008, and one is approved for Fiscal Year 2009. These approved projects will provide an additional 915 spaces.

We also are considering additional modular Child Development Centers, subject to more detailed planning and availability of funds. Planned MILCON and modular centers would add approximately 2,600 spaces, and although our need is expanding, based on our current calculations, this expansion would bring us much closer to the Department of Defense goal. Continued Congressional support will help us provide these needed facilities. As the needs of our families change, our program is committed to grow and adapt to meet these developments.

School Liaison Program

The education of more than 51,000 school-age children of Marine parents has been identified as a readiness and retention issue of great concern. Our Marine children, who are often as mobile as their military parent, face additional stress and challenges associated with frequent moves between schools with differing educational systems and standards. Exacerbating this is the varying degree of satisfaction Marines and their spouses have with the quality and sufficiency of local education systems. The Marine Corps is addressing this issue by establishing national, regional, and installation level School Liaison capability. The School Liaison will help parents and commanders interact with local schools, districts, and state governments to help resolve educational issues. The increased family readiness funding has allowed us to establish a School Liaison position at each Marine Corps installation. Complementing our local effort, the Marine Corps is working with the Department of Defense to establish an "Education Compact" with states to enable reciprocal acceptance of entrance, subject, testing, and graduation requirements. The Education Compact has been enacted in North Carolina and Arizona, and is under varying stages of consideration in the other states with Marine Corps installations.

Posture the Marine Corps for the Future

As we prepare for an unpredictable future, we must continue to assess the potential future security environments and the challenges of tomorrow's battlefields. Our solid belief is that a forward deployed expeditionary force, consistently engaged and postured for rapid response, is as critical for national security in the future as it is today. The Marine Corps, with its inherent advantages as an expeditionary force, can be rapidly employed in key areas of the globe despite challenges to U.S. access. Our sea-based posture will allow us to continue conducting security cooperation activities with a variety of allies and partners around the world to mitigate sources of discontent and deter conflict. We must increase our capacity to conduct security cooperation operations without compromising our ability to engage in a major regional conflict.

Realignment in the Pacific: Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI)

The Defense Policy Review Initiative was established in 2002 by the United States and Japan as a means to review each nation's security and defense issues. One of the key outcomes of this process was an agreement to move approximately 8,000 Marines from Okinawa to Guam. The movement of these forces will address encroachment issues facing Marines on Okinawa. Moreover, the relocation will afford new opportunities to engage with our partners in Asia, conduct multilateral training on American soil, and be better positioned to support a broad range of contingencies that may confront the region. Furthermore, the political agreements brokered by the Office of the Secretary of Defense provide for a long term presence of Marines on Okinawa as well as substantial financial support by the Government of Japan.

As can be expected with an effort of this scale and complexity, there are a number of challenges. Developing training areas and ranges on Guam and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands is a key pre-requisite for moving Marine forces to Guam. We also seek a contiguous base design on Guam where housing, operations, and quality of life facilities can be collocated. This will reduce the road traffic on Guam and provide for a better security posture. We have also found that collocated facilities — where Marines live and work — tend to be used more often, and serve to unify the military community.

We continue to work within the Department of Defense to align our training and installation requirements with ongoing environmental assessments and political agreements. Planned and executed properly, this relocation to Guam will result in Marine forces that are combat ready, forward postured, and value-added to U.S. interests in the Pacific for the next fifty years.

Security Cooperation MAGTF

The Security Cooperation Marine Air Ground Task Force (SC MAGTF) provides geographic combatant commanders with a security cooperation capability for employment in remote, austere locations across the globe. SC MAGTFs will be organized based upon the specific requirements of each training event or operation they are requested to support and will enhance the combatant commander's ability to alleviate the conditions that cause instability to proliferate.

Training and Education

Our training and education systems, from recruit training to top-level Professional Military Education schools, rigorously instill in our Marines the physical and mental toughness and intellectual agility required to successfully operate in today's and tomorrow's complex environments. Marine Corps forces are organized, trained, equipped, and deployed with the expectation of operating under inhospitable conditions against committed and competent foes. Our forces are heavy enough to sustain major combat operations against conventional and hybrid threats but light enough to facilitate rapid deployment. Capability enhancements across the board are supported by a vigorous application of lessons learned from current operations.

Operation ENDURING FREEDOM Pre-deployment Training Program

The Afghanistan Pre-deployment Training Plan provides well-trained individuals and units that are prepared to operate in the austere and challenging environment of Afghanistan. While similar to the current Iraq Pre-Deployment Training Program, the Afghanistan Pre-deployment Training Program emphasizes the inherent capability of the MAGTF to conduct combined arms operations within a joint, multinational, and interagency framework. The capstone event of the Afghanistan Pre-Deployment Training Program incorporates all elements of the MAGTF.

Combined Arms Training, Large Scale Exercises, and Amphibious Operations

Our training programs must prepare Marines to support current commitments and maintain MAGTF proficiency in core warfighting capabilities. We are developing a program of nested training exercises that focus on interagency and coalition operations to support the current fight and prepare the Marine Corps for the Long War.

The Combined Arms Exercise - Next is a service-level, live-fire training exercise that develops the core capability of combined arms maneuver from the individual Marine to the regimental-sized unit level. This exercise focuses on the integration of functions within and between the MAGTF elements. The MAGTF Large Scale Exercise is a service-level training exercise that develops the MAGTF's capability to conduct amphibious power projection and sustained operations ashore in a joint and inter-agency environment.

Amphibious operations are a hallmark of the Marine Corps. Through a combination of amphibious-focused professional military education, classroom training, and naval exercises, we will ensure MAGTFs are capable of fulfilling Maritime Strategy amphibious requirements, combatant commanders' operational plans, and future national security requirements.

Training and Simulation Systems

Cost-effective training requires a combination of live, virtual, and constructive training to attain the requisite level of combat readiness. We have leveraged technologies and simulations to augment, support, and create training environments for Marines to train at the individual, squad, and platoon levels. Virtual and constructive simulations support the pre-deployment training continuum, while live training systems create a training environment that replicates battlefield effects and conditions. Our long-range effort for infantry skills simulation training is the Squad Immersive Training Environment. This provides realistic training for our infantry squads. Over the past year, we have increased our efficiency and provided greater training opportunities for

the individual Marine up to the MAGTF and joint level to satisfy Title 10 and joint training readiness standards.

Training Range Modernization — Twentynine Palms Land Expansion

Our facilities at Twentynine Palms are critical to the pre-deployment training of our deploying Marine units. These facilities support the integration of fires and maneuver of new and emerging weapons systems, which cannot be accomplished within current boundaries of other Marine Corps bases. The Corps believes that to meet obligations to the Nation's defense, we must conduct live-fire and maneuver exercises at the Marine Expeditionary Brigade level.

The Marine Corps' Mission Capable Ranges Initiative guides Marine Corps range planning and investment. A key to this initiative is the proposed expansion of the Marine Air-Ground Task Force Training Command's range complex at Marine Corps Base Twentynine Palms, California. This 507,000-acre installation, established in the 1950s, requires expansion to meet today's training requirements. We have begun the National Environmental Policy Act-required environmental studies to guide decisions during the acquisition process, and we expect acquisition to commence in 2012.

Core Values and Ethics

In an effort to improve values-based training and address the difficult ethical dilemmas faced by Marines, the John A. Lejeune Leadership Institute implemented several initiatives and publications to strengthen core values training. Publications include the Leadership, Ethics, and Law of War Discussion Guide. These guides offer 15 contemporary case studies with suggested topics for discussion group leaders. We have also published a primer on the Law of War and Escalation of Force, a discussion aid on moral development, and *Issues of Battlefield Ethics and Leadership* — a series of brief, fictionalized case studies to develop Small Unit Leaders. These are used in our schools, beginning with recruit training at boot camp and continuing into MOS training and PME schools.

Two video versions of case studies were created to sharpen the focus of our semiannual Commandant's Commanders' Program on the commander's role in setting a climate of positive battlefield ethics, accountability, and responsibility. In addition, the John A. Lejeune Leadership Institute held the first Russell Leadership Conference since 2002 with 230 first-line leaders from across the Corps. The conference broadened and reinforced our leaders' understanding of the role they fill as ethical decision-makers, mentors, and critical thinkers.

Marine Corps University

The Marine Corps University established a Middle East Institute in 2007 to research, publish, and promote regional awareness. A highly successful Iran Conference clearly demonstrated the utility of the institute. The new Marine Corps University Press was a successful step in our outreach program that includes publishing a professional journal. These initiatives were all part of Marine Corps University's health assessment and are an integral part of the University Strategic Plan.

Conclusion

Marines take extreme pride in the comment attributed to journalist Richard Harding Davis, “The Marines have landed, and the situation is well in hand.” Our history has repeatedly validated that statement. Our training and organization ensures our fellow Americans that they should never doubt the outcome when her Marines are sent to do the Nation’s work. Our confidence comes from the selfless sacrifices we witness every day by courageous young Marines. They responded magnificently after 9/11 — took the fight to the Taliban and Al Qaeda, conducted a lightening-fast offensive campaign in Iraq, and turned the tide in the volatile Al Anbar province. Now, we are ready to get back to the fight in Afghanistan — or wherever else our Nation calls.

Your Marine Corps is grateful for your support and the support of the American people. Our great young patriots have performed magnificently and written their own page in history. They have proven their courage in combat. Their resiliency, dedication, and sense of self-sacrifice are a tribute to this great Nation. They go into harm’s way knowing their country is behind them. On their behalf, I thank you for your enduring support. We pledge to be good stewards of the resources you most generously provide and remain committed to the defense of this great land. Thank you again for the opportunity to report to you today.