

**STATEMENT OF
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COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
BEFORE THE
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
CONCERNING
POSTURE
ON
FEBRUARY 10, 2004**

Chairman Warner, Senator Levin, distinguished members of the Committee; it is my honor to report to you on the state of readiness of your United States Marine Corps. Your Marines are firmly committed to warfighting excellence, and the support of the Congress and the American people has been indispensable to our success in the Global War on Terrorism. Your sustained commitment to improving our Nation's armed forces to meet the challenges of today as well as those of the future is vital to the security of our Nation. On behalf of all Marines and their families, I thank this Committee for your continued support.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the near-term, the Marine Corps' top priorities are to maintain our high state of readiness and to provide capable forces that meet the demanding needs of the Unified Combatant Commanders in order to prosecute the Global War On Terrorism in support of the Nation. For the long-term, the Marine Corps and Navy are committed to developing a Seabasing capability that will provide a critical joint competency for assuring access and projecting power that will greatly improve the security of the United States. The marked increase in our warfighting capability will be apparent as we introduce new systems such as the MV-22 Osprey, the Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle, the Joint Strike Fighter, and the Lightweight 155mm howitzer into our force structure, using them to enhance the already potent combat power of our Marine Air-Ground Task Forces as integral elements of our Nation's joint force.

The Navy-Marine Corps team continues to play a critical role in the Global War On Terrorism and in the establishment of stability and security throughout the world. During this past year, the Marine Corps, both active and reserve, was engaged in operations from Afghanistan, to the Arabian Gulf, the Horn of Africa, Liberia, the Georgian Republic, Colombia, Guantanamo Bay, and the Philippines. Most prominent in highlighting the value and power of the Nation's naval expeditionary capability was the Marine Corps' participation in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. Success in this operation underscored the unique contributions of our multi-dimensional naval dominance, our expeditionary nature, our flexibility to deal with complex situations and challenges, and the adaptability of our forces and individuals in order to defeat the challenges posed by adaptive, asymmetric enemies and long-term threats.

Early last year, the I Marine Expeditionary Force deployed a combat ready force of almost 70,000 Marines and Sailors in less than 60 days using the full array of our complementary power projection capabilities. Forward deployed Marine Expeditionary Units (Special Operations Capable) again demonstrated their proven value for immediate response. Eleven strategically located Maritime Prepositioned Force ships were unloaded in 16 days to provide the equipment and sustainment for two Marine Expeditionary Brigades. A seven ship amphibious force from each coast embarked a total of 11,500 Marines, Sailors, and their equipment and within thirty days these fourteen ships began to arrive and offload in Kuwait. Strategic sea and air lift was also vital to our success in this effort. Exploiting the operational speed, reach, and inherent flexibility of seapower, the Navy-Marine Corps team achieved a rapid buildup of sustained warfighting power that was combat ready to support U.S. Central Command on 1 March 2003.

Closely integrated with our joint and coalition partners, as well as Special Operations Forces, the I Marine Expeditionary Force provided the Combatant Commander with a potent combined arms force comprising a balance of ground, aviation, and combat service support elements all coordinated by a dynamic command element. This teamwork – the product of demanding and realistic Service and joint training – presented a multi-dimensional dilemma for the Iraqi regime’s forces and loyalists. It also greatly increased the range of options available to our leadership as they addressed each unique and complex situation. The integration of the 1st United Kingdom Division within the I Marine Expeditionary Force provides outstanding lessons for achieving merged coalition capabilities and consistent goals in the future.

The combat power of I Marine Expeditionary Force generated an operational tempo that our enemy could not match. With short notice that operations would commence early, the Marines and their joint and coalition partners rapidly secured key strategic objectives. The I Marine Expeditionary Force then engaged in 26 days of sustained combat operations. Using the tenets of maneuver warfare, they executed four major river crossings, fought ten major engagements, and destroyed eight Iraqi divisions before stopping in Tikrit – almost 500 miles inland. In support of Joint Special Operations Forces Northern Iraq, the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit inserted a Marine-Air Ground Task Force from the Eastern Mediterranean into Northern Iraq – almost 1,200 miles distance. The sustained resources of the Marine force, which were derived primarily from our seaborne logistics, provided us unrivaled advantages.

While our logistics were stretched by the operational commanders, our combat service support units demonstrated flexibility and resourcefulness.

Highlighting the expeditionary mindset of Marines, our combined arms force successfully operated in desert, urban, swamp, and rural environments while effectively conducting combat, peacekeeping, and humanitarian operations – at times simultaneously. Marines also demonstrated the ability to re-task and reorganize to conduct unanticipated missions like the taking of the city of Tikrit. Following major combat operations, I Marine Expeditionary Force assumed responsibility for security and stability in five Central Iraq provinces until they were relieved of the last province by coalition forces this past September. Flexibility and adaptability are key characteristics of an expeditionary force, and they are critical advantages that we must seek to optimize for the future, particularly in this era of global uncertainty.

Recent operations also emphasize the increased importance of access to key regions for projecting our Nation's power. With global interests, the United States must retain the capability to secure access as needed. Power projection from the sea greatly increases the range of options available to avert or resolve conflicts. A credible naval forcible-entry capability is critical to ensure that we are never barred from a vital national objective or limited to suboptimal alternatives.

Since the end of major combat operations, the Marine Corps has been setting the force in order to enhance warfighting readiness for future contingencies. We are reloading combat equipment and materiel on the ships of the Maritime Prepositioned Squadrons while also ensuring that the requirements for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM II are fulfilled. We are using provided funding to repair, refurbish, and where necessary, replace equipment. During this period, Marines have continued to forward deploy. Marine Corps units are supporting Operation ENDURING FREEDOM in Afghanistan, operations in the Horn of Africa, exercises critical to supporting the Combatant Commanders' Theater Security Cooperation Plans, and counter-drug operations in support of joint and joint-interagency task forces. In addition, we have conducted a major program to identify and analyze lessons learned from the Iraqi campaign. We have also begun to assimilate these lessons and determine where and how our force should be rebalanced.

As the last few years have demonstrated, the Marine Corps Reserve is a full partner in our total force. Reserve units participated in all aspects of the war in Iraq, providing air, ground,

and combat service support as well as a large number of individual augmentees to Marine and joint staffs. Mobilized Marine reserve infantry battalions have also served as ready reaction forces, "on call" to support the Federal Emergency Management Agency's role in homeland security.

II. BUILDING ON SUCCESS FOR IMMEDIATE OPERATIONS

We continue to execute global operations and exercises with our joint and coalition partners. The Marine Corps is preparing to deploy forces to relieve the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment and the 82d Airborne Division in Western Iraq in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM II. These forces will be deployed in two rotations of seven months each. This rotation policy will result in the least disruption for the long-term health of the Marine Corps, precluding stop-loss/stop-move and unnecessary interruptions in recruit training, career progression and development, professional military education, and other deployment requirements. The first rotation, from March until September 2004, will include 25,000 Marines and their equipment and includes almost 3,000 reserve component Marines. A second rotation – of like size and composition – will overlap the first and ensure a smooth and stable transition.

In preparation for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM II, I Marine Expeditionary Force has analyzed lessons learned from their experiences in conducting security and stability operations from March to September 2003, and recent Army lessons learned. As they did last year, I Marine Expeditionary Force is working closely with the Army forces in Iraq; they have conducted a number of liaison visits with the Army units they will relieve. They have drawn from procedures used by the Los Angeles Police Department for neighborhood patrolling in gang dominated areas, the tactics of the British in Iraq – which reflect years of experience in low intensity conflicts and peacekeeping operations, as well as the Marine Corps' own extensive "Small Wars" experience. We have assimilated these lessons through a comprehensive training package that includes tactics, techniques, procedures for stability and counter-insurgency operations. We have conducted rigorous urban operations training and exercises. Over 400 Marines are receiving Arabic language immersion training, and all deploying Marines and Sailors are receiving extensive cultural education. Our supporting establishment is focused on the equipment, logistics, and training requirements of this force – paying particular attention to individual protective equipment, enhanced vehicle and aircraft hardening, and aviation survival

equipment and procedures. This training and support are critically important as we send Marines back to war in a volatile, dangerous, and changing situation.

During this next year Marine Expeditionary Units will still deploy as part of Naval Expeditionary Strike Groups in support of Combatant Commander requirements. Units will continue to rotate to Okinawa and Iwakuni Japan, and some of those forces will further deploy in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM II. While the operational tempo remains high, recruiting and retention continue to exceed our goals. We are monitoring the health of our Service, and we are focused on ensuring that the Marine Corps remains ready for all current and future responsibilities.

III. TAKING CARE OF OUR OWN

Events of the past year continue to highlight the value of the individual Marine over all other weapon “systems.” While we always strive to provide our Marines with the best equipment and weapons, we never forget that people and leadership are the foundations of the Marine Corps’ readiness and warfighting capabilities. Operation IRAQI FREEDOM demonstrated that the Marine Corps’ recruiting, training, and education of the force are extremely successful in maintaining the high standards of military readiness our Nation requires. The Marine Corps remains committed to taking care of our Marines, their families, and our civilian Marines.

Marines

End Strength. The Marine Corps is assimilating the Congressionally authorized increase in Marine Corps end-strength to 175,000. The increase of 2,400 Marines previously authorized by Congress addressed an urgent need to train and maintain enough Marines for the long-term requirements associated with the Global War on Terrorism. It has been particularly important in enabling us to provide the Nation with a robust, scalable force option specifically dedicated to anti-terrorism – the 4th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (Anti-Terrorism).

The Marine Corps is expeditionary by nature and therefore accustomed to deploying in support of contingency and forward presence missions. **We are structured in such a way as to satisfy our enduring requirements and meet operational contingencies as long as the contingencies are temporary in nature. While the force is stretched, we are meeting our**

current challenging operational commitments. Our high operational and personnel tempos have not negatively impacted accessions or retention efforts; however, we continue to monitor both very closely.

Recruiting. Sustaining our ranks with the highest quality young men and women is the mission of the Marine Corps Recruiting Command. Recruiting Command has consistently accomplished this mission for more than eight years for enlisted recruiting and thirteen years for officer recruiting. This past year the Marine Corps recruited over 100 percent of its goal with over 97 percent Tier I High School graduates. In order to continue attracting America's finest youth, Recruiting Command provides its recruiters the best tools available to accomplish their mission.

The Marine Corps Reserve achieved its Fiscal Year 2003 recruiting goals with the accession of 6,174 Non-Prior Service Marines and 2,663 Prior Service Marines. With regard to our reserve component, officer recruiting and retention to fill out the requirements of our Selected Marine Corps Reserve units remains our most challenging concern. This is primarily due to the fact that we recruit Reserve officers almost exclusively from the ranks of those who have first served a tour as an active duty Marine officer and currently the Corps is experiencing a low attrition rate for company grade officers in our active force. We are attempting to alleviate this challenge. Two successful methods include increasing awareness of the benefits of service in the Reserves to the company grade officers who are leaving the active ranks and reserve officer programs for qualified enlisted Marines.

Retention. Retaining the best and the brightest Marines is a constant goal; history has proven that superb leadership in the staff noncommissioned officer ranks is a major contributor to the Corps' combat effectiveness. The ranks of this elite group of leaders can only be filled by retaining our best enlisted Marines. The Marine Corps has two retention measures and both clearly indicate healthy service continuation rates. Our First Term Alignment Plan (first tour) has consistently achieved its reenlistment requirements over the past nine years. With just over one-third of the current Fiscal Year completed, we have achieved 76 percent of our first-term retention goal. Furthermore, our Subsequent Term Alignment Plan (second tour and beyond) reveals that we have already retained 47 percent of our goal for this Fiscal Year.

Current officer retention is at a nineteen year high, continuing a four-year trend of increasing retention. Despite the increased retention overall, certain Military Occupational

Specialties perennially suffer high attrition. We are attempting to overcome this challenge by offering continuation pay for those Marines with Military Occupational Specialties that include special qualifications and skills. Military compensation that is competitive with the private sector provides the flexibility required to meet the challenge of maintaining stability in manpower planning.

Marine Corps Reserve. In 2003, the Marine Corps Reserve rapidly mobilized combat ready Marines to augment and reinforce the active component. Marine Corps Reserve activations in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM began in January 2003, and peaked at 21,316 Reserve Marines on active duty in May 2003. This represented 52 percent of the Selected Marine Corps Reserve (SMCR). Of the approximately 6,000 Reservists currently on active duty, over 1,300 Individual Mobilization Augmentees, Individual Ready Reserves, and Retirees fill critical joint and internal billets. As of January 2004, the Marine Corps Reserve began activating approximately 7,000 SMCR Marines in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM II. Judicious employment of Reserve Marines remains a top priority of the Marine Corps to ensure the Marine Corps Reserve maintains the capability to augment and reinforce the active component. Marine Corps Reserve units and individuals are combat ready and have rapidly integrated into active forces commands demonstrating the effectiveness of the Total Force Marine Corps.

A strong Inspector-Instructor system and a demanding Mobilization and Operational Readiness Deployment Test program ensured Marine Corps Reserve units achieved a high level of pre-mobilization readiness. Marine Reserve Units continuously train to a C1/C2 readiness standard, eliminating the need for post-mobilization certification. Ninety-eight percent of SMCR Marines called up for duty reported for mobilization and less than one percent requested a deferment, delay, or exemption. The Marine Corps Reserve executed a rapid and efficient mobilization with units averaging six days from notification to being deployment-ready, and 32 days after receiving a deployment order they arrived in theater. Many activated Marine Reserve units were ready to deploy faster than strategic lift could be provided.

Building on the important lessons of the last year, the Marine Corps is pursuing several transformational initiatives to enhance the Reserves' capabilities as a ready and able partner with our active component. These pending initiatives include: increasing the number of Military Police units in the reserve component; establishing a Reserve Intelligence Support Battalion to

include placing Reserve Marine Intelligence Detachments at the Joint Reserve Intelligence Centers; returning some of our Civil Affairs structure to the active component to provide enhanced planning capabilities to the operational and Service Headquarters; and, introducing an improved Individual Augmentee Management Program to meet the growing joint and internal requirements.

When called, the Marine Corps Reserve is ready to augment and reinforce. Our Reserve Marines are a vital and critical element of our Total Force. The training, leadership, and quality of life of our reserve component remain significant Marine Corps priorities.

Marine For Life. The commitment to take care of our own includes a Marine's transition from active service back to civilian life. The Marine For Life Program's mission is to provide sponsorship for our more than 27,000 Marines who honorably leave active service each year. The program was created to nurture and sustain the positive, mutually beneficial relationships inherent in our ethos, "Once a Marine, Always a Marine." In cities across the United States, Reserve Marines help transitioning Marines and their families get settled in their new communities. Sponsorship includes assistance with employment, education, housing, childcare, veterans' benefits, and other support services needed to make a smooth transition. To provide this support, Marine For Life taps into the network of former Marines and Marine-friendly businesses, organizations and individuals willing to lend a hand to a Marine who has served honorably.

Initiated in Fiscal Year 2002, the program will reach full operational capability in Fiscal Year 2004. In addition to 110 Reserve Marines serving as "Hometown Links," an enhanced web-based electronic network, easily accessed by Marines worldwide, will support the program. The end state of the Marine For Life Program is a nationwide Marine and Marine-friendly network available to all Marines honorably leaving active service, that will improve their transition to civilian life.

Civilian Marines

Civilian Workforce Campaign Plan. Recognizing that our Civilian Marines are integral to the success of military operations, General James L. Jones, the 32nd Commandant of the Marine Corps, charged our senior Marine Corps officials with the development and implementation of a strategic 5-year plan for the recruitment, development, and retention of our

Civilian Marines. The Civilian Workforce Campaign Plan (CWCP) consists of six strategic goals: 1) nurture, build, and grow Civilian Marines; 2) provide flexible career opportunities; 3) create leaders at all levels; 4) improve the performance evaluation system; 5) strengthen workforce management expertise; and 6) establish an integrated Total Force management approach. As Commandant, I have provided the following additional implementing guidance.

Our vision is to make the Marine Corps the employer of choice for a select group of civilians imbued with the Marine Corps values of honor, courage, and commitment. Through implementation of the CWCP, we will not only define what the Marine Corps will offer its Civilian Marines, but what the Corps expects from them. We will attract, nurture, build, and grow Civilian Marines by providing innovative recruitment, development, retention, reward, and acculturation programs throughout the work-life cycle.

National Security Personnel System. We want to take this occasion to thank again the committee and the Congress for enacting the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) in the fiscal year 2004 National Defense Authorization Act. The Act authorized a more flexible civilian personnel management system for the Department that allowed the Department to be a more competitive and progressive employer at a time when our national security demands a highly responsive system of civilian personnel management. The legislation ensures that merit system principles govern any changes in personnel management, whistleblowers are protected, discrimination remains illegal, and veterans' preference is protected. The Department will collaborate with employee representatives, invest time to try and work out our differences, and notify Congress of any differences before implementation. In January, Department officials met with union representatives to begin the development of a new system of labor-management relations. Later this year, following an intensive training program for supervisors, managers, human resources specialists, employees, as well as commanders and senior management, the Department plans to begin implementing NSPS. The Marine Corps, along with the entire Department of the Navy, expects to be in the first wave of implementation.

Military-Civilian Conversions. The Marine Corps will continue to actively pursue a review of all functional areas within the Marine Corps in an effort to return more Marines to the operating forces. Through Fiscal Year 2003, we have returned over 2,000 manned structure spaces to the operating forces, and we will return approximately 650 more Marines in Fiscal Year 2004. The Fiscal Year 2005 President's Budget converts roughly an additional 1,400 more

billets from Marines to Civilian Marines, which will provide us more options to increase manning in the operating forces.

Education

Amid today's uncertain, volatile security environment, our most effective weapon remains the individual Marine who out-learns, out-thinks, and out-fights any adversary. Such warfighting competence is secured only through intellectual development. Recent events demonstrated how quality education instills confidence in Marines. Our educational standards and programs produce innovative leaders who take initiative and excel during challenging situations involving uncertainty and risk. These high educational standards are inculcated by the Marine Corps University and are designed to target every rank in both our active and reserve forces. Each year the Marine Corps University student population includes members of the other armed services, various government agencies as well as dozens of international military officers from over thirty different countries.

The Marine Corps endeavors to provide its Marines with 'lifelong learning' opportunities through a variety of educational programs, college courses, and library services on our bases and stations. Furthermore, distance learning programs through the Marine Corps University make continuing education available to Marines regardless of their location. In addition, the Marine Corps will continue to fully fund the Tuition Assistance Program in accordance with the Department of Defense guideline – funding for 100 percent of tuition cost up to \$250 per semester hour with a maximum of \$4,500 per year. In Fiscal Year 2003, there were 25,662 Marines enrolled in almost 80,000 courses with the help of the Tuition Assistance Program.

Joint Initiatives. The Marine Corps synchronizes its educational objectives with those of the other armed services in order to provide Regional Combatant Commanders with the most capable joint force. We support the proposal for a Joint Advanced Warfighting School (JAWS) and for broadening Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) opportunities for the Total Force. By working closely with Joint Forces Staff College and our sister services, JAWS has the potential to empower future combatant commanders with talented officers who are experienced in campaign planning. Intent on broadening our joint experience base, the Marine Corps is pursuing an accredited advanced joint curriculum (JPME Phase II) at the Marine Corps War

College and will continue to work to provide JPME opportunities for both active and reserve components.

Senior Leader Development Program. The Senior Leader Development Program was developed last year to address General Officer and Senior Executive Service career development and to link education opportunities to career progression. A study was commissioned to identify the competencies required in each of our general officer billets in an effort to link core and complimentary curriculum with the assignment process. Within the core curriculum, senior leaders will attend the Joint Warfare series of courses as prerequisites by rank and billet while they study innovation, business transformation, and resource management through complementary courses.

Quality of Life/Quality of Service

The Marine Corps works to improve the quality of life for Marines and their families in order to continue the success of the all volunteer force. We provide excellent quality of life programs and services, while also helping new Marines to better understand what to expect in the military lifestyle. We continuously assess, through a variety of means, the attitudes and concerns of Marines and their families regarding their quality of life expectations. With 67 percent of our Marines deployed away from their home installations at the height of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, we carefully captured lessons learned to ensure quality of life programs meet the needs of deployed Marines and families who remain at home. Community and Family Assistance Centers were established at Camp Lejeune, Camp Pendleton, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, and Marine Corps Base Twentynine Palms to provide Marine family members and loved ones access to relevant information and referral services.

To further help Marines and their families before, during, and after deployments, the Marine Corps implemented *Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS) One Source*, a Marine Corps-conducted, Department of Defense funded pilot program providing around-the-clock information and referral services. *MCCS One Source* is especially useful to our activated Marine Reserves and their families as they negotiate the requirements and procedures associated with utilization of military programs such as TRICARE and other benefit services. In recognition of the importance of the transition home after deployments for both Marines and their families, the Marine Corps developed a standardized return and reunion program consisting of a mandatory

warrior transition brief for returning Marines, a return and reunion guidebook for Marines and family members, a caregiver brief, and briefs designed for spouses.

We greatly appreciate the supplemental appropriations bills during 2003, that contained additional help for deployed Marines and their families. In 2004, quality of life efforts will continue to focus on issues related to supporting deployed forces and their families.

Safety

Safety programs are vital to force protection and operational readiness. Marine leaders understand the importance of leadership, persistence, and accountability in the effort to reduce mishaps and accidents. The Fiscal Year 2003 off duty and operational mishap rates were driven upward by the mishaps that occurred during and post Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, while the aviation mishap rate decreased. To meet the Secretary of Defense's challenge to all Services to reduce mishaps by 50 percent in two years, the Marine Corps is focusing on initiatives that deal particularly with the development of strategies and specific interventions to reduce all mishaps. Our leadership at every level understand the challenge, and we are actively involved in the effort to safeguard our most precious assets — Marines and Sailors.

IV. BUILDING ON SUCCESS FOR THE FUTURE

The Marine Corps, in partnership with our Navy brethren, provides our Nation with unrivaled maritime power to help secure peace and promote our national interests. The President's Fiscal Year 2005 budget, together with your support, will provide a strong foundation for our continued success. The Fiscal Year 2005 budget – predicated on a peacetime operational tempo – sustains a high level of readiness and ensures our ability to rapidly respond to emerging situations. It also allows us to assimilate new technologies and explore new concepts that will help realize the full potential of our people and their equipment. We will continue to seek improved means to increase the efficiency of our investments and increase the combat effectiveness of our forces.

Technology and Experimentation

The Marine Corps has a long history of innovation and adaptation. Experimentation is our principle means to explore new ideas and technologies in order to develop new capabilities

to overcome emerging challenges. The Marine Corps Combat Development Command has realigned its experimentation program around the Sea Viking campaign. This campaign will explore both concept and prototype technology development pathways leading to the sea-based expeditionary capabilities envisioned for the future, to include forcible entry from the sea. The Sea Viking campaign is complementary to the joint concept development and experimentation campaign of Joint Forces Command and the Navy's Sea Trial experimentation process. As an integral part of this effort, the Marine Corps is refining the expeditionary combat capabilities best suited to participate in future Expeditionary Strike Group and Expeditionary Strike Force operations. It is also exploring the potential for an expanded Seabasing capability in support of future joint operations.

The Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory has experimented with several new pieces of equipment to enhance individual and small unit effectiveness. Based on successful experimentation, limited numbers of the M16A4 Modular Weapons System, Rifle Combat Optic, and the Integrated Intra Squad Radio were fielded for use during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. The Marine Corps continues to seek enhanced capabilities for the future as we continue to improve and transform the force. In addition, we have procured sufficient quantities of the Outer Tactical Vest and its Small Arms Protective Insert plates to ensure all Marines participating in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM II are equipped with enhanced ballistic protection.

New Concepts and Organizations

The Expeditionary Force Development System implemented this past year is a methodological process that is designed to facilitate the development and realization of military operational concepts. It is a streamlined and integrated system that covers all phases of concept development to the acquisition of necessary equipment and weapons systems. The Expeditionary Force Development System proved to be of great value to our forces engaged in combat operations and is proving to be a helpful means of ensuring that the Marine Corps quickly profits from recent operational experiences. The system is compatible with and supports naval and joint transformation efforts as it integrates transformational, modernization, and legacy capabilities and processes. Several emerging concepts and organizational structures are maturing that will benefit the Marine Corps and ensure we can meet the future demanding requirements of the Combatant Commanders.

The Seabasing Concept. Seabasing, envisioned as a National capability, is our overarching transformational operating concept for projecting and sustaining multi-dimensional naval power and selected joint forces at sea. As stated by the Defense Science Board in its August 2003 Task Force report: “Seabasing represents a *critical future joint military capability* for the United States.” It assures joint access by leveraging the operational maneuver of forces globally from the sea, and reduces joint force operational dependence upon fixed and vulnerable land bases. Seabasing unites our capabilities for projecting offensive power, defensive power, command and control, mobility and sustainment around the world. This will provide our Regional Combatant Commanders with unprecedented versatility to generate operational maneuver. Seabasing will allow Marine forces to strike, commence sustainable operations, enable the flow of follow-on forces into theater, and expedite the reconstitution and redeployment of Marine forces for follow-on missions. As the core of Naval Transformation, Seabasing will provide the operational and logistical foundation to enable the other pillars of Naval Transformation (Sea Strike, Sea Shield, Sea Base, and FORCEnet).

This year, the Marine Corps has continued to refine plans for the Marine Expeditionary Brigade of 2015, in concert with our concept for sea-based operations. Similarly, the Analysis of Alternatives for our Maritime Prepositioning Force (Future), a critical component of Seabasing, will provide valid choices for achieving Seabasing capabilities. These initiatives will complement, rather than replace, the amphibious lift and forcible entry capacity of the LHA(R), LPD-17, and LHD, and will provide the Nation a deployment and employment capability unmatched in the modern world.

Expeditionary Strike Groups. The Marine Corps and Navy continue the series of experiments that will refine the Expeditionary Strike Group concept. This concept will combine the capabilities of surface action groups, submarines, and maritime patrol aircraft with those of Amphibious Ready Groups and enhanced Marine Expeditionary Units (Special Operations Capable) to provide greater combat capabilities to Regional Combatant Commanders. Navy combatants are incorporated within the existing training and deployment cycle of the Amphibious Ready Group. Further experimentation will also allow us to test command-and-control arrangements for the Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG). We will soon complete the pilot deployment in this series, ESG-1, composed of West Coast Navy and Marine forces. The ESG-2, composed of East Coast Navy and Marine forces, will deploy later this year. Currently,

the Marine Corps Combat Development Command is working with Navy and Marine operating forces to capture critical information from these experimental deployments to ensure that the ESG capability thoroughly integrates doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, education, personnel, and facilities. Also, the Marine Corps Combat Development Command is working with the Navy to develop the concept for the employment of the additional capabilities that the ESG provides Regional Combatant Commanders. Finally, the Center for Naval Analyses is evaluating the series of experiments through embedded analysts deployed with both ESGs and will submit their consolidated reports to the Navy and Marine Corps in October 2004.

Marine Corps – U.S. Special Operations Command Initiatives. The Marine Corps continues to aggressively improve interoperability with Special Operations Forces. The U.S. Special Operations Command-Marine Corps Board has developed over 30 initiatives to support our interoperability goals. The Marine Corps and U.S. Special Operations Command are working to leverage existing pre-deployment and deployment training as a means to “operationalize” our relationship. Our deploying Marine Expeditionary Units (Special Operations Capable) exchange liaison officers with the Theater Special Operations Commands as the Marine Expeditionary Units deploy within the various theaters. On June 20, 2003, a Marine Corps “proof of concept” Detachment that is task organized to complement U.S. Special Operations Command mission areas in Direct Action, Special Reconnaissance, Coalition Support and Foreign Internal Defense formally stood up at Camp Pendleton, California. The Detachment transferred to the operational control of U.S. Special Operations Command last December, to facilitate joint pre-deployment training and is scheduled to deploy in April 2004, with a Naval Special Warfare Squadron supporting U.S. Central Command. Finally, we are conducting joint training with U.S. Special Operations Command in the areas of fixed and rotary wing air support of special operation missions.

Reestablishment of Air-Naval Gunfire Liaison Companies. During this past summer the Marine Corps reestablished an Air-Naval Gunfire Liaison Company in I Marine Expeditionary Force and another in the II Marine Expeditionary Force. These companies provide teams that specialize in all aspects of fire support – from terminal control to support of division fire support coordination centers. They greatly enhance Marine Air-Ground Task Force Commanders’ liaison capability – with foreign area expertise – to plan, coordinate, employ, and conduct terminal control of fires in support of joint, allied, and coalition forces. Each company

will be fully stood up by this summer, and a separate platoon will be stood up in III Marine Expeditionary Force in October 2004.

Tactical Aircraft Integration. Naval Tactical Aircraft (TacAir) Integration makes all Naval Strike-Fighter aircraft available to meet both Services' warfighting and training requirements. As part of the TacAir Integration plan, a Marine Fighter-Attack squadron will eventually be attached to each of the ten active Carrier Air Wings and will deploy aboard aircraft carriers. In addition, three Navy Strike-Fighter squadrons will be assigned into the Marine Corps' Unit Deployment Program for land-based deployments. Force structure reductions associated with this plan should result in a total cost savings and cost avoidance of over \$30 billion. The integration of the fifth Marine squadron into a Carrier Air Wing and the first Navy squadron into the Unit Deployment Program are scheduled for later this year.

TacAir Integration retains our warfighting potential and brings the Naval Services a step closer to the flexible sea based force we envision for the future. A leaner, more efficient naval strike-fighter force is possible because of three underlying factors. The first factor is 'Global Sourcing' – the ability to task any non-deployed Department of Navy squadron to either Service's missions, allowing for a reduction in force structure. Second, 'Level Readiness' – applying the proper resources to training, maintenance, and modernization, will ensure the smaller force is always capable of responding to the Services' and Nation's needs. Third, the development of an operational concept that will efficiently manage the employment of this integrated strike-fighter force within the naval and joint context. Support of readiness accounts, modernization programs, and our replacement of the F/A-18 and AV-8B with the Short Takeoff and Vertical Landing (STOVL) Joint Strike Fighter will ensure the potential promised by this integration.

Better Business Practices

The Secretary of Defense and Secretary of the Navy have emphasized, and the Marine Corps is committed to, business transformation in order to optimize resource allocation. The Marine Corps is employing a variety of business transformation initiatives including: competitive sourcing of over 3,500 commercial billets to save \$57 million annually; outsourcing garrison food service in our mess halls in the continental United States in to free up 594 Marines for other duties; using public-private ventures to fund new family housing and to increase the

quantity of safe, comfortable, and affordable homes; consolidation of equipment maintenance from five to three echelons in order to improve maintenance effectiveness and efficiency; and, regionalizing garrison mobile equipment to realign Marines and dollars with higher priorities. The Marine Corps continues to develop its activity based costing capability in order to support fact based decision making.

In March 2003, the Marine Corps began participation in the Navy Marine Corps Intranet (NMCI) – a network outsourcing initiative that will provide a common end-to-end Department of Navy information system capability for voice, video, and data communications. By outsourcing information technology services not considered to be core competencies, the Marine Corps has been able to return 355 supporting establishment personnel structure spaces to the operating forces. As a result of this improved business practice, the NMCI operating environment will promote greater naval interoperability. The Marine Corps will continue to refine our business practices and increase the effectiveness of warfighting potential.

V. OUR MAIN EFFORT – EXCELLENCE IN WARFIGHTING

Training

Training at Eglin Air Force Base. In anticipation of the cessation of naval expeditionary forces training in Vieques, Puerto Rico, efforts began in September 2002 to establish a new training capability at Eglin Air Force Base (AFB). Training at Eglin AFB is envisioned to provide a near term pre-deployment training capability for East Coast Navy Amphibious Ready Groups/Expeditionary Strike Groups and Marine Expeditionary Units (Special Operations Capable), with the potential to be part of the long-term solution. The training concept was designed for up to two 10-day training periods per year. The long-term objective is that during each 10-day event, the Expeditionary Strike Groups will be able to conduct the full spectrum of training required. The Marine Corps has invested approximately \$4.2 million in environmental assessment/mitigation and infrastructure development required to establish an initial training capability at Eglin AFB.

In December 2003, the Marine Corps completed its first 10-day training period at Eglin AFB, at an additional cost of approximately \$1 million. The Marine Corps is assessing the quality the training offered at Eglin AFB while continuing to explore and develop other options, both within the United States and abroad. While Eglin AFB has the potential for enhanced live

fire and maneuver training, developing this capability will require a significant investment by the Department of the Navy and Department of Defense to upgrade existing facilities.

Joint National Training Capability. As described by the Deputy Secretary of Defense: “The centerpiece of our Training Transformation effort will be a Joint National Training Capability.” The Joint National Training Capability is one of the three pillars of Training Transformation, and will improve joint interoperability by adding certified ‘joint context’ to existing Service training events. The Joint National Training Capability is a cooperative collection of interoperable training sites, nodes, and events that synthesizes Combatant Commander and Service training requirements with the appropriate level of joint context.

The first in a series of pre-Initial Operational Capability Joint National Training Capability exercises was held in January 2004, linking a Marine Corps Combined Arms Exercise with live Close Air Support sorties, a Navy Stand-off Land Attack Missile Exercise, an Army rotation at the National Training Center, and an Air Force Air Warrior Exercise. The Marine Corps will be actively involved in future Joint National Training Capability exercises including Combined Arms Exercises and Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron-1 evolutions scheduled for Fiscal Year 2005. The Marine Corps is fully engaged in the Joint National Training Capability program development, and is on track to enhance Service core-competency training with the appropriate level of joint context. In concert with the other Services, the Marine Corps is working with Joint Forces Command to refine the phrase “joint context,” certify ranges, and accredit exercises to ensure the force is training properly.

Infrastructure

Blount Island Facility. The acquisition of the Blount Island facility in Jacksonville, Florida, is critical to our Nation and to our Corps’ warfighting capabilities. Blount Island’s peacetime mission is to support the Maritime Prepositioning Force. Its wartime capability and capacity to support massive logistics sustainment from the continental United States gives it strategic significance. The Blount Island facility has a vital role in the National Military Strategy as the site for maintenance operations of the Maritime Prepositioning Force. The Marine Corps thanks Congress for your role in supporting this acquisition project. Phase II, funded by the \$115.7 million appropriated in the Defense Authorization Act of 2004, gives the Marine Corps

ownership of the leased maintenance area and supporting dredge disposal site consisting of 1,089 acres.

Encroachment. We are grateful to Congress for providing a tool to facilitate the management of incompatible developments adjacent to or in close proximity to military lands. We are working with state and local governments and with non-governmental organizations such as the Trust for Public Lands, The Nature Conservancy, the Sierra Club, and the Endangered Species Coalition to acquire lands buffering or near our bases including Camp Lejeune, Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, and Camp Pendleton. In return for our investment, the Marine Corps is receiving restrictive easements that ensure lands acquired remain undeveloped and serve as buffer zones against future encroachment on our bases.

We are also grateful to Congress for codifying legislation that gives us the opportunity to partner with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and State fish and game agencies in order to manage endangered species present on military lands. Management via our Integrated Natural Resources Management Plans, which we prepare in partnerships with these agencies, allows us to protect and enhance populations of these species on our lands while allowing Marines to train. Finally, we support the Secretary of Defense's efforts to provide flexibility under the Clean Air Act and to clarify the governing authorities under which DoD would manage operational ranges. The Marine Corps strives to be a good environmental steward and the growing number of endangered species on our lands and their increasing populations are examples of our successes. We remain committed to protecting the resources entrusted to us by the American people.

Base Realignment and Closures. A successful Base Realignment and Closure process, resulting in recommendations in 2005, is critically important to the Nation, the Department of Defense, and the Department of Navy. By eliminating excesses and improving efficiencies, the armed services will achieve a transformation of our infrastructure in the same way we are achieving a transformation of our forces. Recommendations will be developed only after a thorough and in-depth review.

Command and Control

Naval expeditionary warfare will depend heavily on the ability of the forces to share linked and fused information from a common source which will, in turn, ensure command and control of widely dispersed forces. Exploiting the use of space, ground and aerial platforms

requires a networked, protected, and assured global grid of information. Leveraging command and control technology to improve our interoperability continues to be our focus of effort.

Advances in technology and a need to leverage existing infrastructure requires us to establish a new Information Technology (IT) framework — one that is more reliable, efficient, secure, and responsive. This new IT framework must provide enhanced information access and improved information services to the operating forces. By streamlining the deployment of IT tools and realigning our IT resources, the Marine Corps Enterprise IT Services will shift the burden away from the operating forces by establishing a new IT environment. This IT environment will fuse and integrate Department wide, net-centric enterprise services to provide a common set of sharable IT services to the entire Marine Corps. By eliminating individual organizations providing duplicative and redundant services, we will reduce the IT burden on the operating forces through enterprise provided IT services, and improve our ability to process information and enhance the speed of decision-making.

Intelligence

Our Fiscal Year 1996 through Fiscal Year 2004 enhancements to Marine intelligence improved the intelligence capability within Marine units and established a “reach-back” intelligence production capability between forward deployed units and our Marine Corps Intelligence Activity in Quantico, Virginia. These improvements are proving to be remarkably beneficial to our efforts in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. Marine intelligence is concurrently supporting ongoing operations, preparing for near term operations, and transforming our intelligence systems to meet future warfighting requirements. Marine Intelligence Specialists have provided significant contributions to ongoing operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Djibouti and will play a crucial intelligence role as Marine Forces return to Iraq in larger numbers this year. Before again deploying to Iraq, we will train over 400 Marines in basic Arabic to aid in our efforts to work with the Iraqis at the patrol level, and we will provide enhanced language training for some of our Arabic heritage speakers and others trained linguists to increase our operational influence and effectiveness. Meanwhile, we prepare for future conflicts by ensuring that our intelligence training and systems funded in the Fiscal Year 2005-2009 program incorporate the latest technological advances and become more

capable of seamless interoperability with the systems used by other armed services and national agencies.

Mobility

As preliminary assessments of operations in Iraq highlight, operational and tactical mobility are essential to overcome the current range of threats. The ability to rapidly respond and then flexibly adapt to a changing situation is critical to address future challenges. Increasing the speed, range, and flexibility of maneuver units that are enhanced by logistical power generated from the sea, will increase naval power projection. The following initiatives are vital to achieve greater operational mobility:

MV-22 Osprey. The MV-22 remains the Marine Corps' number one aviation acquisition priority. While fulfilling the critical Marine Corps medium lift requirement, the MV-22's increased range, speed, payload, and survivability will generate truly transformational tactical and operational capabilities. With the Osprey, Marine forces operating from a sea base will be able to take the best of long-range maneuver and strategic surprise, and join it with the best of the sustainable forcible-entry capability. Ospreys will replace our aging fleets of CH-46E Sea Knight and CH-53D Sea Stallion helicopters.

KC-130J. Continued replacement of our aging KC-130 fleet with KC-130J aircraft is necessary to ensure the viability and deployability of Marine Corps Tactical Air and Assault Support well into the 21st Century. Acquisition of the KC-130J represents a significant increase in operational efficiency and enhanced refueling and assault support capabilities for the Marine Corps. The KC-130J provides the aerial refueling and assault support airlift resources needed to support the Osprey, the Joint Strike Fighter, and the Marine Air-Ground Task Force and Joint Force Commanders.

Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle (EFV). The EFV, formerly known as the Advanced Amphibious Assault Vehicle (AAAV), will provide Marine surface assault elements the requisite operational and tactical mobility to exploit fleeting opportunities in the fluid operational environment of the future. Designed to be launched from Naval amphibious shipping from over the horizon, the EFV will be capable of carrying a reinforced Marine rifle squad at speeds in excess of 20 nautical miles per hour in sea state three. This capability will reduce the vulnerability of our naval forces to enemy threats by keeping them well out to sea while

providing our surface assault forces mounted in EFVs the mobility to react to and exploit gaps in enemy defenses ashore. Once ashore, EFV will provide Marine maneuver units with an armored personnel carrier designed to meet the threats of the future. EFV will replace the aging Assault Amphibious Vehicle (AAV). With its high speed land and water maneuverability, highly lethal day/night fighting ability, and advanced armor and Nuclear Biological and Chemical protection, the EFV will significantly enhance the lethality and survivability of Marine maneuver units and provide the Marine Air Ground Task Force and Expeditionary Strike Group with increased operational tempo across the spectrum of operations.

Power Projection Platforms. Combined with embarked Marines, amphibious warships provide our Nation with both a forward presence and a flexible crisis response force. These power projection platforms give decision-makers immediately responsive combat options. As the Seabasing concept matures, enhanced naval expeditionary forces will be optimized to provide a full spectrum of capabilities.

Inherent in the Sea Strike pillar of the Seabasing concept is the ability to both strike with fires from the sea base and from units maneuvering within the littoral region. The dilemma that these two offensive capabilities impose on an enemy and the multitude of options they create for our leadership increase our ability to achieve success effectively and efficiently. The built-in flexibility and survivability of amphibious ships coupled with their combat sustainment capability ensure the rapid achievement of a full range of offensive operations that either allow us to accomplish operational objectives directly or enable us to set the conditions for major joint operations. The ability to defeat an anti-access strategy – before it is completed or even once it is developed – is vital to our national security objectives.

The LPD 17 class amphibious ships, currently planned or under construction, represent the Department of the Navy's commitment to a modern expeditionary power projection fleet. These ships will assist our naval forces in meeting the fiscally-constrained programming goal of lifting 2.5 Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) Assault Echelons (AEs). The lead ship detail design has been completed and the construction process is over 80 percent, complete with a successful launch in July 2003. Production effort is focused on meeting test milestones for a November 2004 delivery. Construction of LPD 23 has been accelerated from Fiscal Year 2006 to Fiscal Year 2005, leveraging Fiscal Year 2004 Advance Procurement resources provided by

Congress. LPD 17 replaces four classes of older ships-the LKA, LST, LSD, and the LPD-and is being built with a 40-year expected service life.

LHAs 1-5 reach their 35-year service life at a rate of one per year in 2011-15. LHD-8 will replace one LHA when it delivers in Fiscal Year 2007. In order to meet future warfighting requirements, the Navy and Marine Corps leadership is evaluating LHA (Replacement) – LHA(R) – requirements in the larger context of Joint Seabasing, power projection, the Global War On Terrorism, and lessons learned from Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM. The resulting platform will provide a transformational capability that is interoperable with future amphibious and Maritime Preposition Force ships, high-speed connectors, advanced rotorcraft like the MV-22, Joint Strike Fighter, and Expeditionary Fighting Vehicles.

Maritime Pre-positioning Force. The leases on the current Maritime Prepositioning Ships begin to expire in 2009. The Maritime Prepositioning Force (Future) – MPF(F) – will be a key enabler to sea-based operations. It will allow us to better exploit the maneuver space provided by the sea to conduct joint operations at a time and place of our choosing. When the MPF(F) becomes operational, the maritime prepositioning role will expand far beyond its current capability to provide the combat equipment for a fly-in force. MPF(F) will serve four functions that the current MPF cannot: (1) at-sea arrival and assembly of units; (2) direct support of the assault echelon of the Amphibious Task Force; (3) long-term, sea-based sustainment of the landing force; and (4) at-sea reconstitution and redeployment of the force. The enhanced capabilities of these ships will significantly increase the capability of the Sea Base – in the Seabasing concept – to provide unimpeded mobility and persistent sustainment. This enhanced sea base will minimize limitations imposed by reliance on overseas shore-based support, maximize the ability of the naval elements of the joint force to conduct combat operations from the maritime domain, and enable the transformed joint force to exploit our Nation’s asymmetric advantage of our seapower dominance. The ability to rapidly generate maneuver forces from this sea base will augment our forward presence and forcible entry forces, increasing the overall power and effect of the joint campaign. Acceleration of the lead MPF (F) from Fiscal Year 2008 to Fiscal Year 2007 in the Fiscal Year 2005 budget reflects an emphasis on Seabasing capabilities. The Fiscal Years 2005-2009 plan procures three MPF (F) ships and advanced construction for an MPF (F) Aviation variant.

High Speed Connectors. High Speed Connectors (HSC) possess characteristics that make them uniquely suited to support the Sea Base and sea-based operations. HSCs are unique in combining shallow draft, high speed and large lift capacity into a single platform. HSCs will help create an enhanced operational capability by providing commanders with a flexible platform to deliver tailored, scalable forces in response to a wide range of mission requirements. The range and payload capacity of HSCs, combined with their ability to interface with current and future MPF shipping and access austere ports greatly enhances the operational reach, tactical mobility, and flexibility of sea-based forces.

Mine Countermeasure Capabilities. There is a great need to continue the development of our mine countermeasure capabilities. A major challenge for the Navy-Marine Corps Team is ensuring the effective delivery of ground forces ashore when mines and other anti-access measures are employed in the surf zone or ashore beyond the high water mark. We are currently exploring with the Navy how the technology of Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAM) promises a short-term solution and may lead to a better long-term solution to the challenge of mines in the surf zone. Using unitary bombs, fuses, and JDAM tail kits, we have designed a mine countermeasure known as the JDAM Assault Breaching System, (JABS). Preliminary test results are showing promise as an interim solution for breaching surface laid minefields and light obstacles in the beach zones. Further testing and characterization of the JABS system is proceeding throughout Fiscal Year 2004 with tests against Surf Zone Mines and obstacles.

Some aspects of JABS development may lead to a long-term solution to the mine threat. One possible solution that is envisioned includes developing bomb-delivered darts that physically destroy buried mines in the Beach Zone and Surf Zone region. In addition, the Navy has adopted the Marine Corp Coastal Battlefield Reconnaissance and Analysis (COBRA) mine sensor system for the beach zone with a planned product improvement enhancement for COBRA called the Rapid Overt Airborne Reconnaissance (ROAR) that extends detection to the very shallow water and the surf zone regions by 2015. In addition, the Marine Corps seeks to improve breaching capability beyond the high water mark by developing both deliberate and in-stride breaching systems. These include the Advanced Mine Detector program and the Assault Breacher Vehicle program.

Fires and Effects

As events over the past year have demonstrated – and suggest for the future – the increased range and speed of expeditionary forces and the depth of their influence landward has and will continue to increase. To fully realize these capabilities the Nation requires a range of complementary, expeditionary lethal and non-lethal fire support capabilities. During Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, sixty AV-8B Harrier aircraft were based at-sea aboard amphibious shipping – minimizing the challenge of airfield shortages ashore. This prelude to future sea-based operations was extremely successful with over 2,200 sorties generated – mostly in support of I Marine Expeditionary Force ground units. A key factor to this success was the employment of forward operating bases close to the ground forces which allowed the AV-8B to refuel and rearm multiple times before returning to their ships. In addition, the complementary capabilities of surface and air delivered fires were highlighted in this campaign. Further, the importance of both precision and volume fires was critical to success. Precision fires assisted in reducing both collateral damage and the demands on tactical logistics. I Marine Expeditionary Force also validated the requirement for volume fires in support of maneuver warfare tactics. These fires allow maneuver forces to take advantage of maneuver warfare opportunities before precision intelligence can be developed and precision fires can be employed against fleeting targets or rapidly developing enemy defensive postures.

Short Take Off Vertical Landing Joint Strike Fighter (STOVL JSF). The STOVL JSF will be a single engine, stealth, supersonic, strike-fighter capable of short take-offs and vertical landings. The aircraft is designed to replace the AV-8B and FA-18 aircraft in the Marine Corps inventory. The operational reliability, stealth, and payload capability designed into the STOVL JSF represents a great improvement in combat capability over existing legacy platforms. The aircraft is in the second year of a 10-12 year development program. The STOVL JSF force is integral to our future warfighting capabilities. Its design and capabilities will fulfill all Marine Corps strike-fighter requirements and better support the combined arms requirements in expeditionary operations. Continued support of the STOVL JSF is vital to the Marine Corps.

Indirect Fires Support. In response to identified gaps in our indirect fires capability, the Marine Corps undertook an effort to replace the aging M198 155mm towed howitzers and provide a full spectrum all-weather system of systems fires capability. Operations in Iraq

confirmed this requirement and the direction that the Marine Corps has undertaken. This system of systems will be capable of employing both precision and volume munitions.

The Lightweight 155mm howitzer (LW 155) is optimized for versatility, pro-active counter fire and offensive operations in support of light and medium forces. It supports Operational Maneuver from the Sea and replaces all M198's in the Marine Corps, as well as the M198's in Army Airborne, Light Units and Stryker Brigade Combat Teams. Compared to the current system, the LW 155 is more mobile, capable of more rapid deployment, more survivable, and more accurate. Initial operational capability is expected during Fiscal Year 2005, and a full operational capability will be reached three years later.

The High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) fulfills a critical range and volume gap in Marine Corps fire support assets by providing twenty-four hour, all weather, ground-based, responsive, General Support, General Support-Reinforcing, and Reinforcing indirect fires throughout all phases of combat operations ashore. HIMARS will be fielded in one artillery battalion of the active component and one battalion of the reserve component. An initial operational capability is planned for Fiscal Year 2007 with a full capability expected during Fiscal Year 2008. An interim capability of one battery during Fiscal Years 2005-2006 is also currently planned.

The Expeditionary Fire Support System (EFSS) is the third element of the triad of ground firing systems, and it will be the principal indirect fire support system for the vertical assault element. EFSS-equipped units will be especially well suited for missions requiring speed, tactical agility, and vertical transportability. The estimated Approved Acquisition Objective is eighty-eight systems. Initially, this provides eleven batteries to support our Marine Expeditionary Units (Special Operations Capable). Initial operational capability is planned for Fiscal Year 2006 and full operational capability is planned for Fiscal Year 2008.

Naval Surface Fire Support. An important element of our fires and effects capability will continue to be surface ships that provide direct delivery of fires from the sea base. Critical deficiencies currently exist in the capability of the Navy to provide all-weather, accurate, lethal and responsive fire support throughout the depth of the littoral in support of expeditionary operations. In the critical period of the early phases of the forcible entry operations when organic Marine Corps ground indirect fires are not yet or just beginning to be established, the landing force will be even more dependent on the complementary capability required of naval

surface fire support assets. To date, no systems have been introduced or are being developed which meet near or mid-term Naval Surface Fire Support requirements. The DD(X) destroyer – armed with two 155mm Advanced Gun Systems – continues to be the best long-term solution to satisfy the Marine Corps’ Naval Surface Fire Support requirements. Our Nation’s forcible entry, expeditionary forces will remain at considerable risk for want of suitable sea-based fire support until DD(X) joins the fleet in considerable numbers in 2020. Currently, the lead ship of this class will not be operational until Fiscal Year 2013. In addition, the Marine Corps is closely monitoring research into the development of electro-magnetic gun technology to support future range and velocity requirements. Electro-magnetic guns could potentially provide Naval Surface Fire Support at ranges on the order of 220 nautical miles, and could eventually be incorporated into ground mobile weapon systems like the future Expeditionary Fighting Vehicles as size, weight, and power technology hurdles are overcome.

H-1 (UH-1Y/AH-1Z). The current fleet of UH-1N utility helicopters and AH-1W attack helicopters is reaching the end of their planned service life and face a number of deficiencies in crew and passenger survivability, payload, power availability, endurance, range, airspeed, maneuverability, and supportability. The Department of the Navy has determined that the H-1 Upgrade Program is the most cost effective alternative that meets the Marine Corps’ attack and utility helicopter requirements until the introduction of a new technology advanced rotorcraft aircraft. The H-1 Upgrade Program is a key modernization effort designed to resolve existing safety deficiencies, enhance operational effectiveness of both the UH-1N and the AH-1W, and extend the service life of both aircraft. Additionally, the commonality gained between the UH-1Y and AH-1Z (projected to be 84 percent) will significantly reduce life-cycle costs and logistical footprint, while increasing the maintainability and deployability of both aircraft. On 22 October 2003, the program to enter Low-Rate Initial Production (LRIP), and on 29 December 2003 the LRIP Lot 1 aircraft contract was awarded to Bell Helicopter.

Information Operations. The Marine Corps is exploring ways to ensure Marines will be capable of conducting full spectrum information operations, pursuing the development of information capabilities through initiatives in policy and doctrine, career force, structure, training and education, and programs and resources. Marine forces will use information operations to deny, degrade, disrupt, destroy or influence an adversary commander’s methods, means or ability to command and control his forces.

New Weapons Technologies. The Marine Corps is particularly interested in adapting truly transformational weapon technologies. We have forged partnerships throughout the Department of Defense, other Agencies, and with industry over the past several years in an effort to develop and adapt the most hopeful areas of science and technology. Several notable programs with promising technologies include: (1) Advanced Tactical Lasers to potentially support a tactical gunship high energy laser weapon, (2) Active Denial System – a high-power millimeter-wave, non-lethal weapon, (3) Free Electron Lasers for multi-mission shipboard weapons application, and (4) various promising Counter Improvised Explosive Device technologies.

Logistics and Combat Service Support

Logistics Modernization. Since 1999, the Marine Corps has undertaken several logistics modernization efforts to improve the overall effectiveness of our Marine Air-Ground Task Forces as agile, expeditionary forces in readiness. Some of these initiatives have reached full operational capability or are on track for complete implementation. Applying the lessons learned from Operation IRAQI FREEDOM resulted in new initiatives concerning naval logistics integration, naval distribution, and the integration of the Combat Service Support Element with Marine Corps Bases.

The Marine Corps' number one logistics priority is the re-engineering of logistics information technology and the retirement of our legacy systems, which is described in the next section. The Marine Corps is working to enhance the integration of its distribution processes across the tactical through strategic levels of warfare, providing the warfighter a “snap shot” view of his needed supplies in the distribution chain to instantly locate specific items that are en route. This capability, described in the following section, will result in increased confidence in the distribution chain and will reduce both the quantity of reorders and the amount of inventory carried to support the war fighter.

Logistics Command and Control. The Global Combat Support System–Marine Corps is the Marine Corps' portion of the overarching Global Combat Support System Family of Systems as designated by the Joint Requirements Oversight Council and the Global Combat Support System General Officer Steering Committee. It is a Marine Corps acquisition program with the responsibility to acquire and integrate commercial off the shelf software in order to

satisfy the information requirements of commanders, as well as support the Marine Corps Logistics Operational Architecture. The Global Combat Support System–Marine Corps program will provide modern, deployable information technology tools for all elements of the Marine Air-Ground Task Force. Existing Logistics Information Systems used today in direct support of our Marine Air Ground Task Forces are either not deployable (mainframe based) or are deployable with such limited capability (tethered client server) that our commanders lack in-transit and asset visibility. Global Combat Support System–Marine Corps requirements include a single point of entry, web based portal capability to generate simple requests for products and services, logistics command and control capability to support the Marine Air Ground Task Force, and back office tools to assist in the management of the logistics chain. These capabilities will improve warfighting excellence by providing commanders with the logistics information they need to make timely command and control decisions. The key to improving the accuracy and visibility of materiel in the logistics chain is to establish a shared data environment.

End-to-End Distribution. The Marine Corps is aggressively pursuing standardization of the materiel distribution within the Marine Corps to include interfacing with commercial and operational-level Department of Defense distribution organizations. Furthermore, distribution processes and resources used in a deployed theater of operations need to be the same as those used in garrison. We strongly support United States Transportation Command’s designation as the Department of Defense’s Distribution Process Owner. In this capacity, United States Transportation Command can more easily integrate distribution processes and systems at the strategic and operational levels and provide the Department of Defense a standard, joint solution for distribution management. Materiel End-To-End Distribution provides Marine commanders the means to seamlessly execute inbound and outbound movements for all classes of supply while maintaining Total Asset and In-transit Visibility throughout the distribution pipeline.

VI. CONCLUSION

The Marine Corps remains focused on organizing, training, and equipping our forces to best support combatant commanders throughout the spectrum of combat. Incorporating recent experiences, increasing our forces’ integration with joint capabilities, exploiting the flexibility and rapid response capabilities of our units, and preserving the adaptability of our Marines, will collectively lead to more options for the combatant commanders. The Marine Corps’

commitment to warfighting excellence and the steadfast support we receive from this Committee will lead to success in the Global War On Terrorism while helping to ensure America's security and prosperity.