

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION
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THE SENATE ARMED
SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**STATEMENT OF
LIEUTENANT GENERAL EMIL R. BEDARD
DEPUTY COMMANDANT PLANS, POLICIES AND OPERATIONS
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
BEFORE THE
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT
ON
APRIL 9, 2003
CONCERNING
O&M BUDGET VS OVERALL READINESS**

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Introduction

Chairman Ensign, Senator Akaka, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee, it is my privilege to report on the state of readiness of America's Marine Corps.

I am deeply honored to report on the readiness of your Marine Corps at a time when the heroic sacrifices of our men and women actively engaged in combating terrorism are being broadcast nightly into every household across America. The Marine Corps' first priority is, and will continue to be, readiness. Our sequence of priorities is "*Mission First, Marines Always*". Our service in Afghanistan, Iraq, and many other places attests to the state of our readiness better than mere words alone.

Operations

As recent events have proven, the world remains uncertain and dangerous. Our nation is a superpower with national interests that extend well beyond our geographic borders. We are participants in a global economy that has brought peace, prosperity, and stability to remote parts of the world, while improving the quality of lives of millions worldwide. Whenever or wherever our national interests were threatened, the Marine Corps has distinguished itself as a certain force in an uncertain world. Being ready when the Nation is least prepared requires focus, dedication, and flexibility. Our national interests face threats ranging from conventional forces to rogue para-military organizations masquerading as civilians using unconventional weaponry and bent on self-destruction. Being ready across the full range of conflict requires organizational scalability. In each instance, we must be able to provide a measured response, to surgically eliminate the threat with minimal collateral damage, while protecting our national interests and goodwill, on a battlefield not of our choosing. Providing a full range of capabilities to the Combatant Commander has tremendous utility in today's world. I know that the distinguished

members of this Committee understand the value of ready forces, as you have always demonstrated your understanding through the strong support you've provided.

The Marine Corps maintains a global, expeditionary perspective, and we posture our forces accordingly. Marine forces serve as a strategic deterrent, as an instrument of diplomacy, and as a demonstration of our National resolve to protect freedom wherever it is threatened and if required, the Marine Corps can rapidly commit combat forces to resolve the conflict. We are a transformational force that is affordable, scalable, sustainable, and prepared to respond across the spectrum of operations, from humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to major conflict. As you have seen in Iraq and elsewhere, your Marines are trained and prepared to be first on the scene, first to help, first to fight, first to serve, and to serve as an enabler and nucleus for the follow-on Joint forces. Our Marine Air Ground Tasks Forces (MAGTF) with their organic logistics and versatility may be task organized as the ideal model of how effective, efficient, well integrated joint operations will execute.

In the Global War on Terrorism, we are exploiting the capabilities and talents of our most sophisticated state of the art weapon – a United States Marine. When the President called, our Marines proved themselves to be well trained, adequately equipped, and up to any challenge. Our equipment, though aging, is well maintained and is accomplishing the task at hand. Marine Corps doctrine of maneuvering from the sea to objectives deep inland has proven itself to be extraordinarily effective. As we speak today, the Nation's premier Expeditionary Force in Readiness is deployed across the globe in support of Operations ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF), NOBLE EAGLE (ONE), and IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF).

The Marine Corps has deployed more than sixty thousand Marines in support of IRAQI FREEDOM. Our Navy-Marine Corps team deployed and massed two of our forward deployed

Marine Expeditionary Units, Special Operations Capable (MEU (SOC)) in the Central Command Area of Responsibility, to establish a presence, and provide a capability to protect our sea passageways and ports of arrival at our intended staging areas. MEU (SOC)s are routinely forward deployed and positioned for global coverage to establish goodwill, maintain a national presence, preserve order, and protect our national interests abroad. Their forward presence protects our homeland from threats well outside our borders. The MEU (SOC)s provided a strategic reserve for Central Command, during the arrival and subsequent off-load of two squadrons of our Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF) in Kuwait. We rapidly offloaded two squadrons of our MPF- eleven ships within eighteen days. The equipment coming off Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadrons 1 and 2 had equipment readiness ratings of 98% and 99% respectively. MPF equipment is modern and 100% compatible with our active force. Once offloaded, it is immediately available for integration into a Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) force consisting of approximately 15,000 Marines and Sailors. The success of our preparation for combat operations in Iraq was made possible because of the readiness of our MPF program as their collective efforts served as a foundation for a Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF). The MEF's efforts were augmented by two amphibious task forces, which sailed from the East and West Coast of the United States. Upon arrival the East Coast Amphibious Task Force (2d MEB) executed various combat missions. The West Coast Amphibious Task Force was composited with the First Marine Expeditionary Force and augmented with follow-on forces arriving by Strategic lift.

Our successes in these global operations and exercises have not been achieved alone. We have worked closely alongside the Navy, our sister Services, and Federal agencies to realize the true potential of joint, interoperable forces in the new environment of 21st Century warfare. The

superior operational and personnel readiness levels we have been able to maintain directly reflect the strong, sustained support of the Congress in last year's National Defense Authorization and Appropriations Acts. In Fiscal Year 2004, we seek your continued support for the President's Budget so we can consolidate the gains made to date, improve those areas where shortfalls remain, and continue transforming the way the Navy - Marine Corps Team will fight in the 21st century.

Marine Corps of the 21st Century

The Marine Corps is grateful for the Congressional support in recent budgets; support that has been essential in improving our readiness, while enabling your Marine Corps to fight the Global War on Terrorism. As we continue to execute missions in the defense of our Nation, we are also ready for other missions the President may direct. The FY 2004 budget funds our most pressing near term readiness requirements and continues the progress toward addressing future readiness.

We have partially funded our efforts to support the Global War on Terrorism by leveraging our modernization efforts and placing some of them at risk. This experience has validated many of our doctrinal precepts and mandated a review of our current and future procurement programs. We have provided supporting documentation to support the President's request for supplement funding to cover the costs associated with the on-going Global War on Terrorism. The Marine Corps' future readiness is less certain with significant elements of risk. I would like to share some of my concerns as they relate to readiness indicators and to provide a glimpse of how we foresee the reconstitution and regeneration of our forces once the current war is over.

Personnel - Taking Care Of Our Marines And Their Families

The Marine Corps believes the deadliest weapon on the battlefield is a well-trained, well-led, and motivated US Marine. “Every Marine a Rifleman” remains more than an institutional belief. We remain committed to “equipping the Marine” not manning the equipment. Achieving and maintaining our current level of readiness is accomplished through extensive maintenance of our legacy equipment and on the backs of the dedicated Marines who maintain them.

The greatest contributor to our continued success is the motivation and desire of our young Marines to be the very best in the world. We have 214,600 Marines today, 175,000 in the active forces and 39,600 in the Selected Marine Corps Reserve. With your help, we have made significant progress in taking care of these young men and women and their families. Increases in military pay and benefits, especially basic allowance for housing increases, improvements in health care, and improvements in on-base housing are key enhancements you have made reality.

While we recruit Marines, we retain families. The young men and women we don’t retain in our Corps return to society as solid American citizens. Our Marines care for their families with the same level of commitment as they serve our Corps. Medical care for sick children, good schools, and a chance to save for a child’s college education are as vital to ensuring our Marines readiness as ensuring there is adequate ammunition. A focused Marine gets the most from his or her training, and knowing that their family is well taken care of allows a Marine to focus.

Reserve Integration. It is important to note that the Marine Corps operates as a total force, including elements of both active and reserve components. We depend on the readiness of our total force. Our reserve component is organized on the same lines as our active force; we

have not transferred a horizontal capability from the active to the reserve forces. Our posture as forward deployed, forces in readiness does not allow us to have combat support or combat service support functions primarily in the reserve structure. Accordingly, we strive to ensure our reserve forces are as well trained and as ready as our active force. We integrate the Marine Corps Reserve forces into ongoing exercises and training. Two Combined Arms Exercises per year are conducted entirely by Reserve forces. In support of the Global War on terrorism and current operations, we have activated more than 20,000 Reserve Marines in units and as staff augmentees. I would personally like to express my gratitude and appreciation to the employers, families, business owners, companies and government offices at all levels who have made it possible for our Reserve Marines to train and to mobilize in support of our efforts against terrorism.

Safety. We are committed to preserving our most precious asset – the individual Marine. We do this by ensuring a safe command climate and working environment remains a critical concern for every operation. The work settings and the missions our Marines complete are inherently dangerous. Effective command climates continually mitigate those dangers through planning, leadership and education. Our safety programs are integral to force protection and operational readiness. Leadership, operational risk management, and programming in safety awareness and standards are vital to providing Marines and their families with a meaningful quality of life and service. Our leadership at all levels is deeply concerned and actively working to improve readiness and save our most precious assets - Marines and equipment.

Training - Ensuring Success On The Battlefield

The key to the Marine Corps' success is no secret, it's our Marines and their level of readiness and training. They are fit, smart, well trained and motivated. They are devoted to their training, their country, and their Corps.

Ensuring these Marines' skills are honed to a razor's edge is an enduring mission of the Marine Corps. We train hard at every opportunity, trying to achieve as much combat training as possible at home station in order to be efficient with our time and money. Marine units train in their core competencies at their home stations. Time spent in transit to distant training areas is lost training time. A lost training minute is never regained. With our forward deployed posture, there is no time, nor are there training areas, to retrain and refresh Marines prior to committing them to either contingency or combat operations. They leave their home stations ready, and we seek to ensure they maintain that readiness during their forward deployments through an aggressive exercise schedule. These exercises, conducted while forward deployed, hone coalition team building and enhance interoperability with our allied partners.

There are few things regarding battle of which I'm certain, but I know that combat is chaotic and confusing. This has never been clearer to Americans than right now. I'm also confident that the weapons systems and equipment you provide are the best and most lethal in the history of warfare. It is essential that we conduct rigorous, realistic training to ensure the safety of our Marines and ensure we can impose our will on our enemies. Rigorous training demands we place our Marines, as closely as possible, under the same stresses, chaos, and confusion we envision they will face in combat.

Rigorous, realistic training can be accomplished in a variety of ways, but the best method we've found replicates the way we fight, and combines live fire and maneuver. We accomplish

this service combat training most effectively at the MAGTF Training Center at 29 Palms California. Ongoing initiatives will expand the role of the Combat Training Center and transform it into a “Center of Excellence” that will focus the training efforts across our operating forces. The Combat Training Center facilitates and supports the development of new concepts and capabilities, thereby reinforcing our combat effectiveness, enhancing joint interoperability, and supporting Dodd transformation efforts.

The future role of the Combat Training Center will grow beyond its current emphasis on battalion-level integrated live fire, combined arms training to support expanded training opportunities for all elements (ground, air, combat service support, and command) of Marine Air-Ground Task Forces up to and including a Marine Expeditionary Brigade. This will include enabling multi-site, distributed training evolutions that tie together units from various bases; and investing in technology that simultaneously links live, virtual, and constructive training. We must retain the areas where we train, particularly those where we train in combined arms in conjunction with our sister service teammates. If we can’t retain the areas we currently use, we must replace them with like or better facilities.

Realistic, challenging Joint exercises are equally important to ensure Marine forces are fully capable of contributing to integrated joint operations. As a combined arms force of both ground and air forces, and with our close relationship to the US Navy, the Marine Corps fully appreciates the synergy inherent in the Joint Force Concept and is an active participant in these challenging exercise programs. Providing well-trained, Service unique capabilities is the foundation for providing forces for Joint warfighting and is our Nation’s truly asymmetric advantage.

One of the most important things we can provide our forward deployed Navy-Marine Corps teams is confidence in their ability to employ all weapons systems at their disposal. Confidence that the forward air controller is going to coordinate an effective and safe mission, that the ground forces will suppress enemy air defenses and direct the trajectories of their projectiles in directions which do not hazard the aircraft and that the strike aircraft will hit the target. We can learn the elements of this training in parts, and in multiple sites, but separate training only works on the skills and techniques in piecemeal fashion, and does not necessarily engender the critical level of integration essential for combat readiness. It is absolutely critical that the Navy and Marine Corps maintain areas where they can combine naval gunfire, artillery, air and ground maneuver forces simultaneously which is the topic of my next point.

Training at Eglin Air Force Base. With cessation of training at Vieques, Puerto Rico, the established training ranges, quality of training support, and proximity to the ocean available at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida can provide Naval Expeditionary Forces with an alternative training capability. Eglin's capabilities, location, and tenant commands provide the opportunity to facilitate joint training between Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, Army and Special Operations Forces. Development of an expeditionary force training capability at Eglin can support the Secretary of Defense's vision and direction for training transformation and the development of a Joint National Training Capability. This type of training area will be critical to Naval expeditionary combat-readiness.

The Marine Corps proposes to execute two ten-day training exercises with a Marine Expeditionary Unit at Eglin each year. These exercises include a variety of scenarios such as amphibious landings, raids, mechanized operations, helicopter operations, and live fire and maneuver exercises. No final decision on training activities can be made until an environmental

assessment currently underway is completed. The Navy and Marine Corps are actively working to develop and sustain cooperative relationships with the local community and the state of Florida to support our training at Eglin, AFB.

The Marine Corps strongly supports the development of a Joint National Training capability that exercises the horizontal and vertical elements of the Joint Force. The Marine Corps also strongly believes that this capability can, and should, be developed in a manner that minimizes increases in OPTEMPO, preserves Service-training opportunities, and improves both Service and joint training areas, ranges, and facilities. The regional approach presented offers the best and most viable option in terms of training opportunities, training value, and maximization of the training audience while minimizing the impact on OPTEMPO and preserving and enhancing Service training.

Development of a live-virtual-constructive Joint National Training Center strongly supports the Marine Corps training vision centered on development of a live-virtual-constructive training environment at all major Marine Corps bases and ranges. This training environment will integrate live training (enhanced by a range instrumentation system) with the full range of existing and emerging Marine Corps virtual capabilities into a virtual/constructive command and control training system called CACCTUS.

Encroachment is a serious threat to the operational readiness of the Corps as it impacts our ability to train. Urban and residential areas now surround many Marine installations that were originally remotely located. The Marine Corps is proactively engaged with federal, state, and local agencies and governments, as well as nongovernmental organizations, to provide win-win solutions to encroachment pressures. Unimpeded access to our installations and ranges is critical to the Marine Corps remaining America's "Force in Readiness."

Our Nation has crafted a strong environmental code of conduct structured on a wide range of federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Vague or inflexible environmental requirements, however, can present significant challenges for Marines training to perform their missions. The Marine Corps supports ongoing efforts to seek clarity and flexibility in environmental laws, so that we may more effectively balance our training requirements with our long-term environmental stewardship responsibilities. The impact of encroachment on the Corps' ability to fully utilize its installations are varied and require constant vigilance and attention to ensure that operational readiness is not diminished.

Additionally, we support the development of the Department of Defense Readiness Reporting System (DRRS). Our efforts to implement our own Training and Requirement manuals with performance standards throughout the Corps will support the DRRS concept. The Marine Corps continually strives to increase the accuracy of our readiness reporting. We readily endorse the concepts and programs that support readiness. The Marine Corps is working with the Department of Defense to develop a system that would automate our reporting requirements, reducing the burden of administrative reporting, while reflecting an accurate portrayal of the status of available resources.

Concepts and Programs That Support Readiness

The amount of wear and tear we are putting on our aging equipment, and the manpower required to maintain them is tied directly to readiness. Thanks to your efforts, the FY 2004 budget allows the Marine Corps to adequately fund our top priority ground and aviation programs vital to future readiness. Our plan will allow us to make more robust investments in transformation and modernization of equipment. However, until this new equipment is fielded, we will continue to maintain the readiness of our legacy systems. We will continue to take

maximum advantage of Service Life Extension Programs (SLEPs) that enable us to improve the reliability and availability of our legacy systems, as we will be forced to continue to invest increasing levels of resources-manpower and dollars-in the maintenance of our aging equipment. The FY 2004 budget request will, with your help, allow us to invest in modernization of expeditionary capabilities, equipping the Marine, warfighting, tactical mobility, fires, and command and control such as:

Expeditionary Capabilities. The Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) is the Nation's premier, medium weight, combat credible, sustainable, forcible entry capability. No combat force in the world, either on-call today or envisioned for the future, has the ability to prevail in an anti-access environment with a forcible entry and then conduct high tempo full spectrum operations in support of US national policy better than a MEB. The Marine Corps maintains a 6.0 MEB lift requirement; 3.0 MEB amphibious lift and 3.0 MEB-Maritime Pre-positioned Force.

Seabasing. Seabasing is the concept of how we will use the sea as maneuver space. Seabasing includes the command and control capability, maneuver from and through, combat support from, as well as combat service support from afloat to support operations to defeat the enemy ashore. The Seabase is the platforms and connectivity that support the seabasing concept. Seabasing provides a sustainable global projection of American power from the high seas. Seabasing offers the potential for secure sovereign, and mobile assembly areas and sanctuaries for key elements of the joint force, allowing our forces to most effectively utilize the international domain of the sea as maneuver space. Fully networked, forward-deployed Naval forces and platforms that are integrated into our seabasing capability will provide Naval power projection for Joint Force commanders. Seabasing will enable a broad range of joint

campaign operations. Sea-based operations incorporate, integrate, protect, and sustain all aspects of Naval power projection, from space to the ocean floor, from blue water to the littorals and inland – without dependence on land bases within the Joint Operating Area. Seabasing will provide enhanced capabilities to the Naval force, such as rapid force closure, phased arrival and assembly at sea, selective offload of equipment tailored for individual missions, and force reconstitution for follow-on employment. The traditional Naval qualities of persistence and sustainment – enhanced by advanced force-wide networks – underpin the staying power and flexibility of the sea base. Naval platforms can stay on-station, where they are needed, for extended periods of time. The at-sea maneuverability of the seabase, coupled with advanced underway replenishment technologies and techniques, will ensure force readiness over time.

Amphibious Shipping. Our amphibious lift requirement has been consistently validated at 3.0 MEB assault echelons. In terms of today's capabilities, that equates to approximately 45 amphibious ships. We understand the fiscal realities we operate within, and have thus adapted to a fiscally constrained amphibious lift capability of 2.5 MEB assault echelon equivalents. We will be able to achieve our 2.5 MEB lift requirement with an all-active force upon delivery of the 12th LPD-17 amphibious ship in 2014. Ultimately, we envision the amphibious fleet consisting of 12 LHDs/LHAs or their replacements, 12 LSDs, and 12 LPD-17's in the 2014 time frame. While currently short of the 3.0 MEB AE goal, this is a force that will provide us, at some risk, the necessary capability to project power in an anti-access environment in the near and mid-term.

We are also concerned with replacing the LHA-1 Tarawa class ships. They will begin to reach the end of their 35-year service life in 2011, and considering the time to design and build a replacement ship, we need to begin the process now. The Marine Corps supports a

modified LHD-8 (“Plug Plus”) ship design in FY 2007 to replace existing LHA class ships. We will through Analysis of Alternatives and ongoing studies, evaluate the adequacy of the R&D and SCN funding for the development of ships for the LHA follow-on replacements. The overall age of the amphibious fleet is also a concern as it is 25% older than the average of all other Navy ships.

Expeditionary Strike Groups. The Marine Corps and Navy are engaged in a series of experiments that will explore the Expeditionary Strike Group concept. This concept will combine the existing capabilities of surface action groups, submarines, and maritime patrol aircraft with those of Amphibious Ready Groups and Marine Expeditionary Units (Special Operations Capable), to provide greater combat capabilities to Combatant Commanders. These experiments will provide critical information to support the future implementation of the concept and highlight any needed changes in service doctrine, organization, training, and personnel.

Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF). Our 3.0 MPF-MEB is loaded aboard leased commercial shipping that is strategically positioned in ports around the world. Prepositioning minimizes the requirement for strategic lift and saves thousands of sorties of strategic lift during the most time sensitive portion of the force deployment. The Department of the Navy has programmed a buy out of the thirteen leased vessels by the end of FY 2006 before their leases expire in FY 2009, 2010, and 2011.

Maritime Prepositioning Force (Future) (MPF (F)). When it becomes operational, the MPF (F) role will expand beyond that of today, and will provide a true seabasing capability. It is envisioned that MPF (F) will provide four new capabilities currently unavailable: (1) Phased at-sea arrival and assembly of units; (2) Selective offload of equipment and cargo; (3) Long-term, sea-based sustainment of forces; and (4) At-sea reconstitution and

redeployment of the force. The Naval Services are exploring several new technology areas during the development of Maritime Pre-positioning Force (Future). Currently, the Maritime Pre-positioning Force (Future) Program is conducting an Analysis of Alternatives to support an acquisition decision by the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the program of record is funding 1 ship in FY08 and 2 in FY09.

Blount Island Acquisition. We are committed to undertake the wisest possible course to conserve our real property and, when necessary, to acquire any additional property that is mission critical. The Blount Island facility in Jacksonville, Florida is a National asset that must be acquired to ensure its availability for long-term use. Blount Island's peacetime mission of supporting the Maritime Prepositioning Force is vitally important, while its wartime capability of supporting large-scale logistics sustainment from the continental United States gives it strategic significance. The facility will play a vital role in the National military strategy as the site for maintenance operations of the Maritime Prepositioning Force for years to come. The Marine Corps began the acquisition of Blount Island with Phase 1, funded in FY2000 and FY2001 to acquire interests in approximately 311 acres of land for the primary purpose of ensuring public safety on parcels adjacent to the leased central management operational area. Phase 2, planned for FY2004, involves acquisition of the central maintenance operational area consisting of over 1,000 acres. The Phase 1 purchase remains ongoing.

Warfighting – Skill Enhancements

Mine Countermeasures. The proliferation of cheap but effective mines employable in critical waters, beaches, ports, roads, and other key areas precludes us from simply detecting and avoiding them. We have significant capability gaps in shallow water, the surf zone, on the beach, and inland. Navy-Marine Corps programs such as the far-term Assault

Breaching System, the Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) Assault Breaching System, the Assault Breacher Vehicle, the Advanced Mine Detector, and the Coastal Battlefield Reconnaissance and Analysis sensor system are addressing significant aspects of the capability gap. Continued support is required to close the gaps in our mine countermeasures capability.

Chemical, Biological Defense (CBD). In regards to our current CBD capabilities, our Marines are trained, ready, and equipped to operate in a chemically or biologically contaminated environment. We have sufficient stocks to give three Joint Service Lightweight Integrated Suit Technology (JSLIST) equivalent suits and gas mask canisters to the Marines who need them. Our forces are augmented by fourteen specially equipped “Fox” vehicles, which are able to detect chemicals in the atmosphere or in the ground. When required, our forces can prevail in a contaminated combat environment. However, mass decontamination of men and equipment remains a significant challenge for our Marines and the Joint Force. It will also be critical to reconstitute our CBD capabilities after hostilities cease in OIF.

Increased Tactical Mobility. The ability to engage the enemy and maneuver with greater speed, range and depth of battlespace.

MV-22 Osprey - Our Top Aviation Priority. The MV-22 Osprey 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 the sea will be able to extend their range of maneuver providing an element of strategic surprise while providing a sustainable forcible-entry capability. Ospreys will replace our aging fleets of CH-46E Sea Knight and CH-53D Sea Stallion helicopters - both aircraft have an average age of in excess of thirty years.

Internally Transportable Vehicle (ITV). A vehicle being developed jointly with US SOCOM, that can be air lifted inside a CH-53 helicopter and MV-22 aircraft. This vehicle will be a high-mobility weapons platform that supports a variety of operations, especially light-strike raids. The secondary purpose of this vehicle is to provide reconnaissance units equal or greater mobility than the maneuver elements they support, thereby enhancing their mission performance and survivability. The speed, agility, and mobility of the ITV will allow the MAGTF commanders to maximize the versatility and range offered by the MV-22 and CH-53 by deploying ground units equipped with light-strike vehicles armed with a heavy or medium machine gun.

Advanced Amphibious Assault Vehicle (AAAV). In addition to the previously mentioned MV-22, the AAAV is the Marine Corps' only Acquisition Category 1D program. AAAV will combine never before realized high-speed land and deep water maneuver, day/night fighting capabilities, and active and passive countermeasures including advanced armor and Nuclear-Biological-Chemical protection and a remarkably lethal 30mm turreted gun. The AAAV will exploit the sea as a maneuver plane and seamlessly maneuver from the sea at 25+ knot speeds and ashore to the objective at 45 mph. This vehicle will provide us with the speed, agility, and firepower and combat force protection needed for the next century, and operationally complements the capabilities of the MV-22.

KC-130J. The KC-130J will bring increased capability and mission flexibility to the planning table with its satellite communications system, survivability enhancements, night systems, enhanced rapid ground refueling, and improved aircraft systems. The KC-130J has 21% increased speed and 35% increased range over current versions of the KC-130. The KC-130J will replace our aging fleet of KC-130F's, R's and T's.

Fires. Supporting the Marine on the Ground with combat power, when he needs it most. It is all about timing, priorities, and effects on the enemy.

The Marine Corps places great emphasis on the power of Close Air Support (CAS). CAS is more than mere air strikes conducted in close proximity to ground forces. It is an integral part of our combined arms capability. CAS provides the MAGTF commander the ability to maneuver and respond quickly to targets of opportunity, vice mere air strikes conducted in close proximity to ground forces. Because of our familiarity with close air support, we also understand what it can not do. Surface based, indirect fires, whether from the land or the sea, are irreplaceable when forces are joined in close combat, particularly in the early phases of a seabased operation. Nothing else is as responsive to the Commander's needs, or as reliable. They are not weather or facility dependent. They are a key component in continuing to extend the reach and lethality of our ground forces. These new ground based systems, and the seabased fires under development by the Navy in combination with STOVL JSF and the upgraded Cobra and Huey helicopter provide the Marine Corps a complete family of integrated sea, air and land based fires.

Joint Strike Fighter (JSF). The Joint Strike Fighter is the next-generation strikefighter for the Marine Corps, Air Force, and Navy and will replace the Marine Corps' AV-8B and F/A-18A/C/Ds. The JSF family of aircraft will include a short takeoff and vertical landing (STOVL) variant, a Conventional Take-Off and Landing (CTOL) variant, and an aircraft carrier-capable variant. Commonality between the variants will reduce both development and life cycle costs and will result in significant savings when compared to the development of three separate aircraft. The Marine Corps requires that its STOVL variant be able to operate from large-deck amphibious ships, austere sites, and forward operating bases. The STOVL Joint

Strike Fighter version will be able to operate from three to five times as many airfields around the world than our existing conventional take-off and landing aircraft. Moreover, because the STOVL variant can operate from both conventional carriers and amphibious assault ship decks, it doubles the number of platforms available for seabased operations. The advantages of a stealthy STOVL strike fighter—capable of taking off from an expeditionary base on land or at sea, flying at supersonic cruise, accomplishing its mission with advanced sensors and weapons, and then returning to its expeditionary site—are dramatic. The STOVL Joint Strike Fighter will provide the reliability, survivability, and lethality that Marines will need in the years ahead, and transform the very foundations of Naval tactical air power for the 21st Century.

High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS). High on our priority list is the capability to marry precision maneuver with precision fires. We require ground based fire support which is lethal, mobile and with long range. HIMARS fills this need. The HIMARS will provide ground-based, responsive, general support and general support reinforcing indirect fires that accurately engage targets at long range, with high volumes of lethal fire, under all weather conditions and throughout all phases of combat operations ashore. It will fire both precision and area munitions and has a maximum range of 60 kilometers. The Ground Weapon Locating Radar will be introduced into the fleet to protect our forces from our adversaries' counter-battery fires. The Ground Weapon Locating Radar can be used in conjunction with the HIMARS and the Lightweight 155mm howitzer.

Lightweight 155mm (LW 155). LW 155 towed howitzer is required to replace the M-198 howitzer that is at the end of its service life. This is a joint USMC/US Army system that will meet or exceed all the requirements of the current M198 system while reducing the

weight from 16,000 to 9,500 pounds. The maximum range using unassisted projectiles is 15 miles and 18 miles using assisted projectiles.

Naval Surface Fire Support. Expeditionary Maneuver Warfare places unprecedented requirements for long-range, accurate, timely fires in support of the maneuver force. Systems such as the Extended Range Guided Munition (ERGM) will ensure the continuous availability of surface based fires firing during an expeditionary operation. ERGM is a guided projectile fired from cruisers and destroyers out to a maximum range of 63 nautical miles. Development of land attack missile technologies will provide supersonic surface-to-surface missiles that will have a range far in excess of naval guns. Combined, the systems will provide a highly responsive, accurate, all-weather means of attacking critical targets and providing support to deployed Marines beyond the range of naval guns.

The Marine Corps strongly supports the development and fielding of DD(X), armed with two 155mm Advanced Gun Systems and an Advanced Land Attack Missile, to fully meet our Naval Surface Fire Support requirements. Our ability to wage expeditionary warfare will remain at considerable risk for want of suitable sea-based fire support until DD(X) joins the fleet in strength.

Reestablishment of Air-Naval Gunfire Liaison Companies. We have validated the requirement to reestablish our Air-Naval Gunfire Liaison Companies (ANGLICO). These companies will provide our commanders a liaison capability with foreign area expertise to plan, coordinate, and employ terminal control of fires in support of joint, combined, and coalition forces. ANGLICO will be reestablished with a company on each coast, and a separate company (-) in Okinawa. The companies on the East and West coasts will have a habitual relationship with the reserves. Full operational capability is expected by late summer 2004.

Marine Corps—U. S. Special Operations Command (US SOCOM)

Initiatives. Today, more than a hundred Marines are filling Special Forces billets around the world. In addition to providing the current Chief of Staff to US SOCOM, the Marine Corps provides support to and ensures interoperability with Special Forces through the actions of the SOCOM-Marine Corps Board. One of the initiatives is a Marine detachment to conduct special reconnaissance, direct action, coalition support, foreign internal defense and other special operations missions. They will report to US SOCOM during October 2003, and deploy in the spring of 2004 as augmentation to a Naval Special Warfare Squadron.

Equipping the Marine

New rifle – We are seeking to upgrade our service rifle to better ensure “Every Marine a Rifleman” remains more than an institutional belief. The Modular Weapon System (MWS) consists of the M16A4 service rifle – a newer version of the M16A2 now in service – modified with a military standard 1913 rail adapter system. The rail adapter system and modified hand guards allow for the mounting of various accessories such as a modified M203 grenade launching system, high-intensity flashlights, night-vision devices, scopes, and infra-red laser target designators. We will also purchase a quantity of M4 carbines for personnel who require a lighter, more compact weapon. Use of the MWS will result in a significant improvement in the ability to mount various accessories and will improve the accuracy, target detection, day and night engagement capability, and maintainability of the M16 family of rifles. The M16A4 is in production and we will take delivery of its first weapons in FY 2003. The M4 is undergoing final reliability and endurance tests and will be fielded in selected units in the first quarter of FY 2004.

Marine Corps Combat Utilities and Combat boot. The Marine Corps has recently introduced a new and improved combat utility uniform made of a durable permanent press fabric with a permanent press crease. The combat utilities have a camouflage pattern that is more effective either wet or dry. The Marine Corps issues them in both woodland and desert patterns for readiness. The Marine Corps has also fielded a new Marine Corps combat boot that is designed to be low maintenance and worn with the new combat utilities. Our initial issue stocks must be continually re-vitalized to sustain our new recruits and officers. The new uniforms have been very well received in the fleet and are extremely popular. The demand for both the new utilities and boot, has kept supply stocks lower than expected and ultimately not widely available throughout the fleet.

Improved Load Bearing Equipment (ILBE). The Marine Corps is testing and evaluating commercially available packs to replace its current service pack. The new pack will be designated the improved load bearing equipment (ILBE) pack. Rugged field testing is being conducted in garrison and in actual combat field conditions. Packs will be evaluated against the current field pack the Modular Lightweight Load Carry Equipment (MOLLE) II, down to the fire team level. Final selection is projected for mid FY 2003 and full rate production to commence in FY 2004.

Command and Control. Exploiting the capabilities offered by long-range aircraft, long range fires and operating from a seabase with full connectivity to our joint and coalition partners poses enormous command and control challenges.

Common Aviation Command and Control System (CAC2S). The CAC2S modernizes our legacy mix of aviation C2 systems, enabling MAGTFs to seamlessly integrate aviation with ground combat operations. CAC2S will condense the applications of six separate

Aviation Combat Element (command and control) systems into one combined and coordinated operational system. It will provide a common hardware platform, with similar software, and equipment.

Unit Operations Center (UOC). The UOC improves command and control coordination for the elements of the MAGTF. The UOC is comprised of Combat Centers and Combat Operation Centers (CoCs), providing a centralized facility to host Command and Control functionality. The UOC will create an integrated package with expeditionary shelters, power sourcing, cabling, software integration, Local Area Networking, and processing systems and is scalable to support command echelons for battalion level or above.

Interoperability. Interoperability is the key to improving Naval expeditionary command and control effectiveness, especially as we integrate battlespace sensors in our future manned and unmanned aerial, space, sea surface and subsurface, and ground vehicles. The command, control, communication, and computer (C4) end-to-end interoperability of the Global Information Grid will enhance our ability to conduct joint, combined, multi-department, and multi-agency operations through the use of technology, standards, architectures, and tools. These transformational C4 initiatives, in concert with the fielding of a Deployable Joint Command and Control (DJC2) capability, will vastly improve our joint-force interoperability.

Reconstitution and Regeneration. The Marine Corps will be faced with many competing requirements as Operation Iraqi Freedom de-escalates and a transitional form of government is installed. These competing priorities are expected to include reserve forces returning to demobilize, redeployment of forces required to assume a forward presence mission, ongoing Global War on Terrorism requirements, preparation for follow-on missions, and returning the Marine Corps to its pre-conflict state of readiness, while transforming the Marine

Corps into a greater force than we have today. Our pre-positioned stocks must be cleaned and preserved after extensive use in order to be ready for the next mission. The critical aspect is our ability to fund all that will be required. It is anticipated that our deployment tempo could remain at higher levels, than those experienced before the Global War on Terrorism began, for sometime to come after the hostilities in Iraq have long since ceased.

Conclusion

Your Marines stand ready to be the “*First To Fight.*” And, we will continue to be so with whatever is on hand -- with older well-maintained equipment or the newest equipment. However, our equipment while well maintained, is old and aging fast due to the higher usage rates caused by the ongoing war. We are able to defeat our enemies in Afghanistan and Iraq because we were ready when called. Answering the call remains our focus, and our number one mission. We need your help in maintaining our old gear, modernizing where we can, and taking care of our Marines and their families.

What you saw in Afghanistan and see in Iraq is just the beginning of what America and the world will see from a fully modernized and transformed Marine Corps. Our Marines are ready, our doctrine works, and with the new equipment ready to come on line, you’re going to get a Marine Corps that’s leaner, more lethal and even more ready just like you’ve expected for 227 years. Only then, it will come with a thousand mile reach. We know that we’re really just beginning the hard work of the global war on terrorism; the tough targets are in our windshield, not our rearview mirror. We need your help to be ready for the tough fights ahead. We believe we have proven worthy of your support and ask that you continue to support your Marine Corps as you always have. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to address readiness – an issue critical to Marines and our Nation.