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THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE**

**STATEMENT OF
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DEPUTY COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS
(COMBAT DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION)
BEFORE THE
HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE
CONCERNING
MARINE CORPS GROUND EQUIPMENT
ON
MARCH 10, 2009**

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Introduction

Chairman Murtha, Congressman Young, and distinguished members of this Subcommittee, I am honored to appear before you today. Thank you for this opportunity to discuss Marine Corps ground equipment programs. Before we begin, on behalf of all Marines and their families, I want to thank you for your continued support for our Marines as they remain engaged in combat operations in OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, and other contingencies.

Marine Corps Vision & Strategy 2025

Upon assuming command, the Commandant of the Marine Corps stated his intent to “posture the Marine Corps for the future.” He directed his leaders to conduct an informed assessment of potential future security environments and report potential implications for the Corps as they relate to the functions of organize, train, and equip.

The assessment concluded that a significant trend of the future security environment is the blurring of previously considered conventional forms of conflict into what can be described as hybrid challenges. Hybrid challenges represent combinations of conventional, irregular, catastrophic, and disruptive threats in addition to those associated with terrorism and criminality, and therefore concurrently present primitive and advanced threats. The assessment also predicted hybrid challenges will be the *most likely* form of conflict facing the United States in the future.

With this in mind, we published a vision and strategy that provide the focus and direction for where we intend to take our Corps, gives combatant commanders a concept of how we might best be employed, and provides our civilian leadership a reference point as to how we see the Corps’ contributions to national defense. This document is derived from strategic guidance at the

national and departmental levels and illustrates our utility and value within the joint warfighting community. It is grounded in our identity, ethos, values, and core competencies and is the fundamental basis for our strategic planning to meet the challenges of the 21st Century.

Our Vision and Strategy describes a force in readiness that, by design, is capable of quickly adapting to an inherently unpredictable future with balanced capability across the range of military operations. It is founded on our enduring characteristics and capabilities, but also reflects shifts in posture and practices designed to enhance today's Corps for tomorrow's challenges. The strategy delineates institutional objectives to realize the vision. Additionally, we identified six core competencies that are our touchstones and describe our particular skill sets. They are “what we do” and are what we organize, train and equip to do.

Core Competencies. Our core competencies represent our fundamental contribution to the Nation's joint warfighting capabilities. These core competencies illustrate capabilities that have existed throughout our history as well as some new areas in which we believe we are particularly well suited to excel. These competencies are:

- **Conduct persistent forward naval engagement and respond as the Nation's force in readiness.** Readiness means being engaged in the littorals and contributing to the prevention of conflict in addition to being able to react rapidly across a wide range of tasks from engagement to forcible entry.
- **Employ combined arms and operate as part of a joint or multinational force.** This approach can be applied across the range of military operations.
- **Provide forces for service with the Navy and for operations ashore.** Our modernization programs are designed to enable Marines to deploy and fight from naval vessels, austere expeditionary bases, or any combination. Efforts such as seabasing, the

Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) focusing on Security Cooperation working with Global Fleet Stations will increase our partnership with the Navy and provide forces for operations across the range of military operations.

- **Conduct joint forcible entry operations from the sea.** When access to critical regions is denied, Marines are ready to overcome enemy defenses. Together, the Navy and Marine Corps provide the Nation with its primary capability to project and sustain combat power ashore across the range of military operations.

- **Conduct complex expeditionary operations in the urban littorals and other challenging environments.** This includes counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, peace operations, and advisor tasks.

- **Lead joint and multinational operations and enable interagency activities.**

Marines are well qualified to enable the introduction of follow-on forces and facilitate the integration of military and interagency efforts, especially in expeditionary and austere environments.

Marine Corps Expeditionary Nature. As General Conway has stated, expeditionary excellence requires Marines who are morally, physically, and mentally tough. This means that being truly “expeditionary” is both an individual as well as an institutional mindset, not simply maintaining the ability to deploy overseas. Therefore, we are organized, trained, equipped, and deployed with the expectation of operating in inhospitable conditions against committed and competent foes. We will focus on being fast, austere, and lethal: ready to travel fast, living hard while functioning effectively in austere conditions, and maintaining the ability to be lethal across the range of military operations.

As a Corps, we will strike a balance between being heavy enough to succeed in a conventional warfare environment and light enough to rapidly deploy to austere locations in the littoral regions of the world. Future operational environments will place a premium on agile and adaptable expeditionary forces. Likewise, we will apply lessons learned from current operations in Iraq and Afghanistan to maintain an edge against adaptive opponents. We will maintain the ability to sustain ourselves in operations through the use of either a sea base or an initial lodgment ashore. This supports our vision of fielding sustainable MAGTFs that exploits joint capabilities, and leverages the joint and multinational advantages of seabasing.

Our expeditionary nature, combined with our naval character, will ensure we excel as an agile force that can react rapidly in and around the littorals of the world. This forward, naval, expeditionary posture permits our forces to operate in areas that others can not, and will not, due to lack of infrastructure, access, or will.

Relevance of the Marine Air Ground Task Force. More than ever, the Nation requires an expeditionary force in readiness. The future will be characterized by a requirement to meet a broad set of missions from security cooperation activities such as training and advising foreign military forces to humanitarian and disaster relief operations, from deterring aggression by defeating hybrid threats to large-scale conventional wars. This requires a wide range of capabilities and equipment sets for our forward deployed forces and a more balanced and multi-capable force to successfully perform the range of missions. The inherent scalability and flexibility of the MAGTF provides this balance.

Our MAGTFs are multicapable; decisive across the range of military operations with their capacity tailored to combatant commanders' requirements. They are inherently balanced and can be specifically tailored to meet discrete missions across the range of military operations

as the combatant or joint force commander requires. The MAGTF is responsive to the combatant commander's demand signal and can focus training and education to address counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, or other irregular warfare challenges while maintaining the ability to aggregate and fulfill a traditional role in major combat operations.

Naval forces, particularly maritime combined arms expeditionary forces, are a valuable asset for the President and Secretary of Defense. Naval forces provide strategic mobility, speed of employment, the ability to operate from over the horizon in an access denial environment, and the ability to conduct sustained operations for extended periods of time. They give joint force commanders an extraordinarily versatile, balanced and lethal asset that can respond to any of tomorrow's challenges.

Modernization of Marine Corps Ground Equipment

Requirements generation overview. The Marine Corps core competencies will guide our force development efforts over the next two decades - ensuring that the Corps will be prepared to accomplish the broad range of missions that we will face in the future. The Expeditionary Force Development System provides the process for identifying and prioritizing Marine Air Ground Task Force capabilities, for documenting capability gaps, and for developing strategies to eliminate those gaps. Resources for prioritized initiatives and programs of record are considered during the Program Objective Memorandum build. Through this system, we shape required capabilities and prioritize our efforts in a disciplined and effective approach to organize, train, and equip our forces. In using the Expeditionary Force Development System, required capabilities are identified that will contribute to the execution of joint concepts, Marine Corps missions, and to meet the needs of the Combatant Commanders.

Lighten the MAGTF. Safeguarding Marines is one of our highest priorities and is one of our most challenging. Our research and development in armoring technologies is doing much to increase

the effectiveness of armor and in many cases, also reducing the weight for both individual protection as well as vehicle armoring. The bottom line is that the focus on armor as the principal means of protecting our force is making us too heavy. Our business is a deadly one and one that we don't take lightly but we have to view force protection as more than armor if we are ever to lighten the MAGTF. In fact, force protection of the MAGTF is also accomplished through our tactics, techniques and procedures and through increased battle space awareness. Lightening the MAGTF makes us faster and more agile; ultimately, making us more effective and deadly to the enemy. Speed and maneuverability inherently provide a measure of force protection, particularly when combined with proper training. We achieve battle space awareness through integration of persistent and responsive Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance delivered by our reconnaissance forces, by Unmanned Aerial Sensors and through other sensor and electronic technologies. These systems do not eliminate risk but they do provide an additional layer to protect our Marines.

We are developing policies and acquisition practices for our future equipment that will make it more modular and scalable to allow us to increase and decrease armor protection and its associated weight according to the commander's assessment of mission requirements and threat. This means that there will be times in the future when Marines and vehicles are armored significantly less than they are today, but with increased mobility and speed. These decisions will not be taken lightly but they are absolutely necessary to enable the accomplishment of our mission. We must ensure that our commanders in the field have flexibility and the ability to tailor equipment sets to match the threat, the operating environment, and demands of the mission at hand.

The expeditionary nature of the MAGTF demands a force that is capable of the rapid movement of combat forces, whether by surface ships and amphibious landing craft, aircraft, vehicles, or on foot. Today's MAGTF is many times more lethal and more multi-mission capable than it was even a decade ago and while some of the equipment used by individual Marines is lighter and more effective than the equipment it replaced we are still a long way away from lightening the load Marines are burdened to carry. Of particular concern is armor, both personal protective armor as well as armoring of combat vehicles. A relatively recent and essential trend, increasing armor on Marines and their vehicles, born from operations in Iraq, threatens to erode our expeditionary capabilities and reduce the effectiveness of our forces. The protection of our Marines is paramount and while body and vehicle armor are life savers other methods for protecting our Marines are equally as important. Our protection philosophy must include training in personal protective measures, tactics, techniques and procedures and training our leaders in personal protective measures that allow flexibility and protection scalability. Our commanders need the flexibility to adjust protection levels as the situation dictates and provide scalability of personal protection equipment, both personal and vehicular, that provides levels of protection that reduce the burden on our personnel and equipment while at the same time enhancing our tactical effectiveness.

Ground Equipment Readiness. Ground force readiness for forward deployed units remains above 90% due in no small part to the hard work and dedication of our Marine and civilian maintainers in theater as well as industry representatives forward deployed. Six years of constant use under harsh operating conditions have subjected our ground equipment to significant wear and tear. The additional weight from added armor plating stresses our equipment beyond designed capability which only exacerbates the challenge of maintaining

equipment readiness for deployed forces. While deployed equipment readiness remains high, the bill payer has been the supply readiness rates for home station units. However, thanks to the supplemental funding support from Congress, we expect to see a steady increase in supply readiness rates as we continue to receive delivery of procured equipment.

Pre-positioning Programs. The Marines Corps' pre-positioning programs are critical to expeditionary operations. They help enable Marine forces to respond to current and future contingency operations and mitigate risk for the Nation. Throughout the last several years, targeted withdrawal of equipment from the pre-positioning program has been a key element in supporting combat operations and growth of the Marine Corps. By drawing on these stocks, the Marine Corps has been able to provide Marines with vital warfighting equipment without waiting for the industrial base to satisfy our new ground equipment requirements.

Restoring our pre-positioning programs remains a high priority. We must ensure they are reset with the most capable equipment possible. The Maritime Pre-positioning Squadrons (MPSRONs) are rotating through scheduled Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF) Maintenance Cycle-9. MPSRON-1 completed MPF Maintenance Cycle-9 in September 2008 and is at 91% of its full equipment set and is expected to be fully reset at the completion of its next maintenance cycle in 2011. Equipment from MPSRON-2 was offloaded to support Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, and much of that equipment remains committed to forward operations today. With projected deliveries from industry, MPSRON-2 will complete MPF Maintenance Cycle-9 in June 2009 with approximately 90% of its planned equipment set, and we plan to fully reset MPSRON-2 in Fiscal Year 2012. MPSRON-3 is currently at 100% of its equipment set, completed during MPF Maintenance Cycle-8 in March 2007.

Our bilateral cost-sharing agreement with the Kingdom of Norway, the Marine Corps Prepositioning Program – Norway (MCPN), continues to prove its operational relevance as a sourcing solution for equipment. We have used ground equipment from the MCPN to support current operations in the CENTCOM AOR, humanitarian operations in the Republic of Georgia, Theater Security Cooperation engagement in Africa, and as part of the Grow the Force initiative. In the future we will continue to reset MCPN in accordance with the operational priorities of the Marine Corps.

Tactical Wheeled Vehicle Strategy.

The focus of Marine Corps plans for future tactical mobility is on replacing the venerable Amphibious Assault Vehicle (AAV) and the family of High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs). The design and capabilities of our future tactical combat vehicles are informed and guided by our amphibious and expeditionary nature, by lessons learned from combat operations and by close partnership with industry, which has helped us to understand technical requirements and make better decisions and tradeoffs during system development. The vehicle designs must achieve balance in what we refer to as the iron triangle: protection, payload, and performance. Our future tactical combat vehicle fleets must provide the commander with balanced capability- vehicles should be adequately protected, yet maneuverable and functional across the range of military operations. Where speed, tactical maneuverability, environmental and terrain considerations dictate the most important capabilities needed in our vehicles, we will carefully consider the tradeoffs in conventional heavy armor protection versus the operational requirements for performance. These tradeoffs are not taken lightly and they are done with full consideration that our Marines will be taking the vehicles into harm's way. Where possible, we are defining requirements for our vehicles that include scalable protection, meaning that it will

be possible, through kitted armor applications to adjust the level of protection as dictated by the threat condition. We anticipate that as technology improves, we will be able to achieve greater degrees of ballistic and explosive protection with lighter materials. The acquisition objectives for our tactical vehicles are based on maintaining our current infantry lift capacity into the future and on restoring our payload capacity throughout the rest of the Marine Corps. In order to do that we will field the Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle (EFV) and the Marine Personnel Carrier (MPC) and we will begin replacing selected HMMWVs with the family of Joint Light Tactical Vehicles (JLTVs).

Current Tactical Vehicle Acquisitions

Expanded Capacity Vehicles. The Expanded Capacity Vehicle is the latest configuration for the HMMWV fleet. The Expanded Capacity Vehicle increased the gross vehicle weight to 12,100 pounds and has a more powerful turbo-charged engine, upgraded suspension and integrated air conditioning system. Additionally the Expanded Capacity Vehicles are designed to accept armor kits installed either at the factory or at organic maintenance facilities. When older model HMMWVs reach the end of economical useful life they will be replaced by the Expanded Capacity Vehicle. The Marine Corps requirement for the HMMWV/Expanded Capability Vehicle fleet is currently 27,942 vehicles. A total of 24,770 HMMWVs have been procured of which 9,029 are Expanded Capacity Vehicles.

Internally Transportable Vehicle. The Internally Transportable Vehicle will provide a deployed MAGTF with a ground vehicle that is internally transportable in the MV-22 tilt-rotor aircraft, CH-53, and MH-47 aircraft. The vehicle will serve primarily as a high mobility weapons-capable platform to support a variety of operations and to provide ground units greater mobility thereby enhancing their mission performance and survivability. The Internally Transportable Vehicle is

in Full Rate Production. We began fielding beginning in January 2009. The Marine Corps Requirement is 729 vehicles, 110 are being procured in Fiscal Year 2009.

Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles. MRAP vehicles are designed to protect vehicle crew and passengers from mine blasts and fragmentary and direct fire weapons. They are designed for protected mobility with a “V” shaped hull and are employed to protect against mines and improvised explosive devices. The current Marine Corps requirement of 2,225 vehicles is comprised of three different variants which supports our ongoing theater operations and home station training. Our fielding requirements were satisfied in June 2008.

The Marine Corps is seeking a lighter, more agile MRAP vehicle better suited to the rugged environment in OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM. We are aggressively executing an acquisition strategy to quickly procure this MRAP- All Terrain Vehicle (M-ATV). Submitted proposals are currently under review and the evaluation will include assessments of production representative vehicles. The Marine Corps is conducting the necessary analysis to establish our specific vehicle requirements for the MRAP-All Terrain Vehicle; where a vehicle with HMMWV like mobility and MRAP survivability is sought.

In addition to our current programs a number of future programs are in various stages of the acquisition process.

Future Tactical Vehicle Acquisitions

Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle. The EFV provides the Marine Corps and the nation with our only self-deploying, tracked, amphibious operations capable, fighting vehicle and is our Commandant’s number one acquisition priority. The vehicle’s design will permit it to carry combat-loaded Marines ashore from ships positioned 25 or more nautical miles off shore providing the ships maneuver space as well as increased force protection for the battle fleet. Its

ability to conduct high speed maneuver at sea as well as on land, combined with its weapon, communication, and protective systems make it a highly survivable and lethal capability. The EFV will be built in two configurations. The command and control variant will support and enable infantry regimental and battalion command and control. The personnel variant will carry a reinforced rifle squad and 3-man crew. The program completed critical design review in December 2008 and is on schedule to begin Low Rate Initial Production in 2012. The acquisition objective is 573 vehicles.

Joint Light Tactical Vehicle. This is a Joint Marine Corps/Army program with the Army as the lead Service for acquisition. The JLTV family of vehicles will be designed to replace multiple configurations of the current family of HMMWVs. The Marine Corps' initial acquisition objective is 5,500 vehicles but the final objective could be 25,000 or more to facilitate replacement of all HMMWVs in our inventory. As the Marine Corps's light utility vehicle it will be required to support multiple mission roles from command and control, to cargo and troop carrying, to specialized ambulance and shelter carriers. Several variants of the JLTV will be required to be externally transportable by Marine Corps Heavy Lift CH-53 helicopters and that requirement will define maximum allowable weights. The JLTV family of vehicles will have scalable levels of protection consisting of a base armor capability and several designed safety and protection capabilities as well as kitted, add-on armor. The basic vehicle design will account for the heaviest anticipated payloads including armor kits to permit the vehicle to retain its all-terrain mobility capabilities even when fully loaded.

Marine Personnel Carrier (MPC). The MPC will be a multi-wheeled, armored personnel carrier designed to operate across the range of military operations but focused on an irregular warfare operating environment characterized by operations in constrained and urban terrain.

Required to carry 8-10 combat loaded Marines and 2-man crew, the MPC will enable high-speed land maneuver as well as substantial ballistic protection to embarked Marines. It is scheduled to begin Engineering, Manufacturing and Development in 2010, with initial operational capability in 2015. The acquisition objective is approximately 630 vehicles.

Individual Weapons

The M16A4 rifle and M4 carbine are the Marine Corps' service weapons. They are both proven weapons and have shown themselves to be accurate, reliable and durable in operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. We have no immediate plans to replace these weapons but we remain closely linked with the other Services and their individual weapons programs. We have made considerable investment in a variety of day and night optics, which are compatible with both the M16A4 and the M4 carbine, which benefited Marines in Iraq and Afghanistan. We have incorporated the Rifle Combat Optic into our annual service rifle requalification requirements so that Marines will have more opportunities to become proficient in its use. Our M9, 9mm pistol is principally used as a secondary weapon by Marines and it has performed satisfactorily.

In 2010 our infantry squads will begin receiving the Infantry Automatic Rifle (IAR) as a replacement for the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW). The SAW will be retained in the infantry battalions and throughout the Marine Corps as a light machine gun. The principal benefit of the new magazine-fed IAR comes from reduced weight and length permitting the automatic rifleman to maneuver more easily with the squad. We are also developing a replacement for our Shoulder Launched Multi-Purpose Assault Weapon (SMAW) to give Marines a lighter weight, more durable weapon with enhanced targeting capabilities and most importantly, the capability to fire from within enclosed spaces thereby reducing their exposure to enemy fire. Our Marine Corps sniper teams are receiving a new suite of equipment to enhance precision and lethality. The suite will include the 7.62mm Rapid Engagement Precision Rifle,

which will replace the M39 Enhanced Marksmanship Rifle. Additionally, sniper teams will receive the Sniper Rifle – 21 that will replace the M40A5 Sniper Rifle.

Surface indirect fires

Organized in a Triad of Ground Indirect Fires, organic Marine Corps assets ensure persistent, complementary, and redundant fires. The triad is composed of three distinct systems that provide adequate range and volume to support maneuver. The longest range system, the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System, provides both precision and volume rocket based fires. The M777 is a medium-caliber artillery system that is currently replacing the M198. The M777 is lighter, more mobile, and more capable than the M198. The final component of the Triad is the Expeditionary Fire Support System, which is a towed 120mm mortar. This system is designed to be paired with the Internally Transportable Vehicle. When employed with heli-borne forces supported by the MV-22, this system will provide responsive fires to commanders at ranges and lethality beyond current infantry battalion indirect fire weapons systems.

Command and Control Harmonization

The United States Marine Corps' Command and Control harmonization efforts are codified in the Marine Air-Ground Task Force Command and Control, commonly called MAGTF C2, initiatives on-going in the Marine Corps. MAGTF C2 provides Marines a synchronized and integrated Command and Control capability that is interoperable with Joint, Coalition, and Inter-Agency partners. Closely coupled with the Navy, MAGTF C2 is the Marine Corps' instantiation of the Naval FORCENET concept, and it forms the basis of the USMC portion of the Global Information Grid. Based upon Joint requirements, MAGTF C2 is a holistic approach that informs and guides Command and Control requirements development and integration across the war-fighting functions in order to provide commanders needed capability to function effectively in the Twenty-First Century environment. MAGTF C2 incorporates both

emerging Service and Joint capabilities to build a seamless, overarching Command and Control solution for the war-fighter. This top-down (Joint and Service requirements), bottom-up (War-fighter needs) approach to providing C2 capability can be seen in three major USMC initiatives: the Combat Operations Center (COC), Common Aviation Command and Control System (CAC2S), and Tactical Communications modernization.

Combat Operations Center. The Combat Operations Center is the cornerstone of the MAGTF's C2 modernization efforts, aimed at providing a common, modular, and scalable C2 system of systems across the MAGTF command echelons that is enabled by an agile, trusted, and shared communications network. The COC is the principal means by which decision-makers in the MAGTF will plan, execute, and assess operations across the range of military operations. MAGTF COC will support MAGTF operations afloat, aloft, ashore, and on the move. COC grew out of stated war-fighter requirements for a common, modular, and scalable C2 system of systems to support commanders and staffs. Inherently Joint, the COC incorporates both Joint and Service programs and DOD interoperability standards to ensure seamless connectivity to support Combatant Commander needs. This capability will be sustained and refreshed to keep pace with emerging information technologies, C2 applications, network enterprise services, and evolving DOD data standards.

Command Aviation Command and Control System (CAC2S) The Common Aviation Command and Control System is the cornerstone of Marine Corps aviation command and control modernization efforts. CAC2S emerged as a top-down, bottom up requirement to provide the aviation command and control portion of the MAGTF triad with a state of the art system of systems that will both meet war-fighter needs and incorporate Joint and Department of Defense directives for a modernized, mobile, interoperable, and common suite of capabilities. CAC2S

fuses data from sensors, weapons systems, and C2 systems into an integrated display that increases situational awareness and facilitates decision-making. CAC2S shares many common parts with the Marine Corps Combat Operations Center, thereby decreasing the logistics support footprint and simplifying training requirements. It enhances a MAGTF commander's ability to integrate MAGTF aviation capabilities in the Joint framework, and control the timing of organic, Joint, and Coalition fires, maneuver, and logistics while operating within the MAGTF battlespace.

Tactical Radio Communications. In January 2008, the Marine Corps Requirements Oversight Council approved an ambitious tactical communications modernization and procurement program. This program provides for upgrading over 120,000 tactical radio systems, focusing its effort at the company and below level. The majority of these radios are multi-band, meaning they can be used on multiple parts of the frequency spectrum, and nearly 80% of them can be used in a hand-held mode. This modernization effort allows the Marine Corps to net enable its forces at progressively lower levels, increasing both situational awareness and combat efficiency. The next step is to modernize combat vehicle radio assets, Maritime Pre-Positioned Squadrons, and training and supporting establishment radio needs. Looking towards the future, the tactical communications modernization program will provide software programmable radios that will integrate well with the Joint Tactical Radio System, and provide the network robustness needed to take advantage of the network revolution at the tactical level.

Reset

In order to maintain the appropriate balance between winning the current war and preparing for the next possible crisis, the Marine Corps must continue to reset our forces. Costs categorized as "reset" meet one of the following criteria: maintenance and supply activities that

restore and enhance combat capability to unit and prepositioned equipment; replace or repair equipment destroyed, damaged, stressed, or worn out beyond economic repair; and enhance capabilities, where applicable, with the most up-to-date technology industry can provide.

As the Marine Corps moves forward with reset and reconstitution of the force, we must ensure we retain the lessons learned from the last seven years of fighting. We must provide modern ground equipment that appropriately balances payload, performance and protection as we reset. Our reset must account for the evolving threat we face today. Congressional support of resetting the Marine Corps has been outstanding. Thus far, Congress has provided over \$12 billion toward reset. On behalf of all Marines and their families, thank you for providing this funding which helps ensure Marines have the equipment they need to properly train for and conduct combat operations. We continue to evaluate and refine current and future reset projections as missions, equipment in theater, and operating tempos change. Our current estimate of over \$8 billion includes Fiscal Year 2009 and the future retrograde of assets as our presence overseas diminishes.

Principle End Item Rotation. As part of the reset process, the Marine Corps has created a retrograde process that inspects all equipment as it is being retrograded from the Central Command Area of Operations. After inspection, equipment will be assessed for replacement, repair, or depot work to fill existing equipment shortfalls. Equipment being replaced or sent to depot will be modernized through the insertion of technology or replaced with more modern variants. Retrograded equipment designated for repair and modernization is sent to the Maintenance Depots at Albany, GA and Barstow, CA to support master work schedule modernization and rebuild actions. To date, over approximately 24,000 principle end items have

been retrograded to Blount Island Command for repair, disposal, or redistribution actions as appropriate.

Closing

We face an adaptive enemy. Our ground equipment must both protect Marines and make them more effective as war fighters. We are doing everything we can to ensure our ground equipment supports Marines in the field. With the support of the Congress, the American people, and industry we can ensure our Marines are ready for the current fight as well as the uncertain future. We owe our best effort to those young men and women who answered the Nation's call. Supporting them is a moral imperative, and a responsibility we take very seriously. Again, I thank you for the opportunity to report on their behalf.