

➤ Permanent Change of Station (PCS) Funding

DISCUSSION

Congress levied an unprogrammed reduction of \$180 million to DoD's FY 2002 PCS budget, a 6% decrease. The Senate conferees had proposed a more severe \$317 million cut before going to joint conference. The congressional committee based this cut in part on an August 2001 Government Accounting Office report, *Military Personnel: Longer Time Between Moves Related to Higher Satisfaction and Retention*, which suggests military personnel were distressed by frequent moves. Reflecting the concerns expressed in this report, the 2002 Appropriations Conference Report directed the Secretary of Defense "to develop a comprehensive plan to reduce the quantity of PCS moves by 25% by the end of fiscal year 2004, and to report to the congressional defense committees on that plan no later than May 1, 2002."

The Marine Corps moves approximately 100,000 Marines a year. About 70% of Marine Corps PCS moves are accession and

separation moves to support the approximately 35,000 Marines that enter or leave the Corps each year. Sixty-four percent of our Marines are on their initial tour of duty. This means that the 25% cut must come from the remaining 30% of the moves that are generated by overseas rotation, training, or operations. Cutting these moves would result in longer tours in the operating forces and less Marines acquiring professional military education. PERSTEMPO would become even more problematic because of the increased length of tours in the operating forces.

MARINE CORPS POSITION

Directed cuts in PCS moves, a policy initially applied across the services, will have adverse effects on Marine Corps force management. This is due to the larger number of initial entry accessions and parallel separation from our young force. This leaves a small group from which to achieve the overall savings objective.