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**STATEMENT OF**

**GENERAL JAMES T. CONWAY**  
**COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS**

**BEFORE THE**

**HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**ON**

**MARINE CORPS POSTURE**

**MARCH 1, 2007**

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Chairman Skelton, Congressman Hunter, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to report to you the state of your Marine Corps.

Your Marine Corps is currently engaged in what we believe to be the opening battles in a generational struggle against Islamic extremists. Our commitment is characterized by diverse and sustained employment around the globe, particularly the central campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. Your Marines are fully engaged in this fight, and it is through their tremendous sacrifices—serving shoulder-to-shoulder with their fellow service men and women—that we will ultimately prevail. It is our moral imperative to support them to the hilt—always mindful that our forward-deployed Marines and Sailors in combat must be our number one priority.

Though Marines in the operating forces have been pushed hard by the tempo and frequency of operational deployments, their morale has never been higher—because they believe they are making a difference. Thanks to you, Ladies and Gentlemen, your Marines know that the people of the United States and their Government are behind them. Support has been exceptional—from the rapid fielding of life-saving equipment to the proposed increase in end strength, and with your continued support, mission accomplishment will remain completely viable and achievable.

The Long War is taking a considerable toll on our equipment and we have tough choices ahead of us—we must support our Marines and their families, while deciding whether to replace our rapidly aging equipment with similar platforms or to modernize with next generation equipment.

We know these next few years will be challenging—not only in the immediate conflict in Iraq, but in subsequent campaigns of the Long War. Therefore, the Corps will balance our skill sets in order to remain prepared for crisis outside of Iraq and Afghanistan—to be where our country needs us, when she needs us, and to prevail over whatever challenges we face. I am confident that with your steadfast support, our Corps will continue to remain the Nation's force in readiness and fulfill its Congressionally mandated mission of being *the most ready when the Nation is least ready*.

## **I. Marine Corps Commitments in the Long War**

Over the past year, your Marines deployed to all corners of the globe in support of our Nation. With more than 24,000 Marines ashore throughout the U.S. Central Command's Area of

Responsibility, Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM remain our largest commitment. In addition to those operations, the Marine Corps also deployed forces to: support humanitarian and disaster relief efforts in Pakistan and the Republic of the Philippines; participate in over fifty Theater Security Cooperation events ranging from small Mobile Training Teams in Central America to the first deployment of the Marine Forces Special Operations Command's Foreign Military Training Unit supporting our African partner nations; protect our Embassies by providing Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Teams to East Timor and Lebanon; and respond to a Non-Combatant Evacuation from Lebanon—the largest since Vietnam.

**Achieve Victory in the Long War.** The Defense Department's 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) directed that we enhance our counterinsurgency capabilities. Our enhanced Marine Air Ground Task Forces and the Marine Corps component to Special Operations Command are part of this commitment. Other types of forces, unique to counterinsurgency operations, may also need to be formed. However, we will maintain robust contingency response forces satisfying the Congress' intent to be "*the Nation's shock troops*"—always ready and always capable of forcible entry.

I view the inherent power of the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) as an irreplaceable component of this Nation's plan for success in the Long War. This war demands flexible organizations that apply a mix of combat and non-lethal actions; interagency capabilities and joint warfare applications; innovative use of airpower; and synchronization of intelligence activities. For rapid integration of these capabilities—as well as providing the critical boots on the ground—the MAGTF is better prepared than any other military formation to execute the full range of operations required by the current conflict. This is the Corps' fundamental fighting organization, providing the joint force a unique, additive capability—one that is much greater than the sum of its parts.

To further expand the MAGTF's contribution to our Nation's security, I have directed my staff to develop a series of exercises that will further enhance the MAGTF's ability to integrate interagency and coalition operations throughout the spectrum of conflict. Our goal will be to provide a forum to develop diverse yet cohesive teams that can best overcome the challenges we are most likely to face in pre- and post-war phases of operations. These exercises will serve our Nation well in the Long War, in future conflicts, and in our ongoing security cooperation efforts.

In February of 2006, we established Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command (MARSOC) within the U.S. Special Operations Command. MARSOC is already employing its five major subordinate elements: the Foreign Military Training Unit, two Marine Special Operations Battalions, the Marine Special Operations Support Group, and the Marine Special Operations School, and is on track to achieve full-operational capability by the end of Fiscal Year 2008. Its personnel and equipment assignment plan is designed to best support our Combatant Commanders in their prosecution of the Long War. The Foreign Military Training Unit was activated in 2005 and has been incorporated into MARSOC, the 2d Marine Special Operations Battalion was activated in May of 2006, followed by the 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion in October of 2006.

MARSOC deployed Foreign Military Training Unit teams to the European and Southern Command areas of responsibility last summer and fall. Through the end of Fiscal Year 2007, the Foreign Military Training Unit is scheduled to make twenty-seven deployments to twelve countries to conduct foreign internal defense and counter narcotics training to improve the indigenous military forces of those countries. Additionally, MARSOC began deploying Marine Special Operations Companies, associated with Marine Expeditionary Units and assigned to Expeditionary Strike Groups in January of this year. MARSOC provides a unique combination of land component and maritime expeditionary capabilities across a wide range of missions. As special operations forces continue to prosecute the Long War, MARSOC will be a significant partner in Special Operations Command.

To aid in both the current execution of the campaign in Iraq as well as the long-term irregular warfare capability of the Marine Corps, we are establishing a Center for Irregular Warfare. This organization will serve as the focal point for integration of concepts, doctrine, training, education, and equipment capability development. This Center will also maintain close coordination with our sister Services and external agencies. Our goal is to enhance the Marine Air Ground Task Force's capabilities by training and equipping small-unit leaders to handle the demanding complexities and possess the adaptive mindset necessary to operate across the spectrum of conflict – empowering our “strategic corporals” as well as all of our junior leaders to fight, operate, and win in this challenging security environment.

**Supporting the Plus-up for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM.** Currently, the Marine Corps has approximately 4,000 Marines affected by the pending plus-up operation in Iraq. The

units affected will be extended for approximately 45 - 60 days. This change will impact our Marines and their families, but we believe that the support systems that we have in place within the units and family support systems back home will help our Marines and their families meet the challenges associated with this extension on deployment. Furthermore, between their return and next deployment, the addition of new infantry battalions will allow these units to lengthen the time at their home station.

Battalions moved forward in the rotation cycle will complete all required pre-deployment training that fully qualifies them for employment. These battalions will be subject to the same pre-deployment training standards as their fellow Marines. We have accelerated the normal cycle through our main mission rehearsal exercise, Mojave Viper, to accommodate consistent training for all units rotating into theater.

The accelerated battalions will deploy with equipment from their home stations, and the additional equipment required will be provided by cross-leveling assets in theater as well as leveraging equipment already positioned forward. This has resulted in some home station shortfalls and has hindered some stateside units' ability to train for other missions and contingencies. While the readiness of deployed units remains high, we have experienced a decrease in the readiness of some non-deployed units.

There are no Marine Corps Reserve units involved in the plus-up operations.

## **II. Right-size our Marine Corps**

To meet the demands of the Long War as well as the inevitable crises that arise, our Corps must be sufficiently manned in addition to being well trained and properly equipped. Like the Cold War, the Long War is a continuing struggle that will not be measured by the number of near-term deployments or rotations, and while we seek to capitalize on advances in technology, we know it is our magnificent Marines who invariably decide the outcome.

In order to protect our most precious asset, the individual Marine, we must ensure that our personnel policies, organizational construct, and training are able to operate at the "sustained rate of fire." Operating at the "sustained rate of fire" means that the Corps will be able to maintain operations indefinitely without drastic changes to procedures, policies, organization, or operations. The proposed Active Component end strength increase will significantly enhance our ability to operate at the "sustained rate of fire."

**Strain on the Individual.** Despite an unparalleled Personnel Tempo, the morale of our Marines and their families remains high. To avoid an adverse toll on our Marines and their families, and to prevent a decrease in readiness, the former Secretary of Defense established a 1:2 deployment-to-dwell ratio goal for all active component forces. This ratio relates to how long our forces are deployed versus how long they are at home—the goal being for every seven months a Marine is deployed, they will be back at their home station for fourteen months. We need to relieve the strain on those superb Americans who have volunteered to fight the Nation’s battles.

**Strain on the Institution.** The current deployment cycle requires commanders to focus solely on those skill sets required to accomplish the mission in Iraq and Afghanistan. This deterioration of capabilities is exacerbated by individual augments and training team requirements and by many units being deployed for missions outside of their normal duties. The result of this strain is evident in the Marine Corps' limited ability to provide trained forces to project power in support of other contingencies. Reduced training time and a necessarily singular focus on current contingency requirements prevents significant opportunities for units to train to the full range of military operations in varied operating environments, such as jungle or mountain terrain. To fulfill our mandate to be “*most ready when the Nation is least ready,*” our deployment cycles must not only support training for irregular warfare, they must also provide sufficient time for recovery, maintenance, and training for other contingency missions. By increasing the dwell time for our units and allowing them additional time at home stations, we can accomplish the more comprehensive training needed for the sophisticated skill sets that have enabled Marine Air Ground Task Forces to consistently achieve success in all types of military operations and operating environments. Our goal is to increase dwell time and achieve a 1:2 deployment-to-dwell ratio for our active forces—our Operating Forces are routinely falling short of this target.

**Reducing the Stress.** I would emphasize, the underlying requirement for an end strength increase is separate from, indeed it pre-dates, the plus-up operation in Iraq. The proposed increase to our Active Component end strength to 202,000 Marines will go a long way to reducing the strain on the individual Marines and the Institution. Our first task will be to build three new infantry battalions and their supporting structure – approximately 4,000 Marines. The resources for this force have been included in our Fiscal Year 2007 Supplemental. These funds

will pay for initial costs associated with the stand up of these infantry battalions as well as critical enablers, which are vital not only for the current fight, but are also critically needed to support long-term Marine Corps capabilities to accomplish other missions. These enablers include combat support and combat service support such as intelligence, military police, and civil affairs capabilities. We will systematically build the additional individuals and units on a schedule of approximately 5,000 per year. This plan will gradually increase the deployment-to-dwell ratio of some of our habitually high operational tempo units—enabling us to recover our ability to respond in accordance with timelines outlined in war plans for our Combatant Commanders; thereby, reducing future operational risks. We are initially funding this initiative with supplemental and baseline funding in Fiscal Year 2008, but have included all future costs in our baseline budget as of Fiscal Year 2009.

**Reserve Component End Strength.** Our efforts in the Long War have been a Total Force effort, with our Reserves once again performing with grit and determination. Recent policy changes within the Department of Defense match up very well with our existing policies and will allow us to use the Reserve forces as they were structured to be employed—to augment and reinforce our Active Component forces. To this end, my goal is to obtain a 1:5 deployment-to-dwell ratio within our Reserve Component. We currently believe our authorized Reserve Component end strength of 39,600 Selected Reserve Marines is adequate. As with every organization within the Marine Corps, we continue to review the make-up and structure of the Marine Corps Reserve in order to ensure the right capabilities reside within the Marine Forces Reserve units and our Individual Mobilization Augmentee program across the force. Finally, as our active force increases in size, our reliance on the Reserve forces should decrease—helping us achieve the desired deployment-to-dwell ratio.

**Manning the Force.** An equally important factor in sustaining a viable force is continuing to recruit and retain qualified young men and women with the right character, commitment, and drive to become Marines. With over 70% of the end strength increase comprised of first-term Marines, both recruiting and retention efforts will be challenged. A major part of this effort will involve programming increased funding for both the Enlistment Bonus and the Selective Reenlistment Bonus Programs. We will need the continued strong support of Congress to achieve ongoing success.

Our recruiting standards will remain high. While exceeding DOD quality standards, we continue to recruit the best of America into our ranks—in Fiscal Year 2006, the Marine Corps achieved over 100 percent of our active component accession goal. The Marine Corps Reserve also achieved 100 percent of its recruiting goals, but reserve officer numbers remain challenging because our primary accession source is from officers who leave active duty. We appreciate the continued authorization for Selected Reserve Officer Affiliation Bonuses in the Fiscal Year 2007 National Defense Authorization Act—they continue to contribute in this crucial area.

We forecast that both active and reserve recruiting will remain challenging in Fiscal Year 2007, particularly when viewed through the lens of accession missions to meet the increased end strength of the Marine Corps. We will need the continued support of Congress for programmed enlistment bonuses and other recruiting efforts, such as advertising, which will be essential to us continuing to meet these challenges.

Retention is the other important part of manning the force. In Fiscal Year 2006, the Marine Corps exceeded its retention goals for both the First Term and Career Forces. For Fiscal Year 2007, we expect to exceed our goals again. This success can be attributed to the Marine Corps' judicious use of the Selective Reenlistment Bonus, and we now offer qualified first term and career enlisted Marines \$10,000 in Assignment Incentive Pay to reenlist. To keep the very best of our Marines, we must increase the size of our reenlistment bonus program in order to ensure that we have the right grade and MOS mix to support the growing force. Not only will we have to retain more first-term Marines, but we will also have to increase the number of Marines reenlisting at the eight and 12-year mark. This will require a shift toward more programmed funding in targeted key areas in the career force.

**Military to Civilian Conversions.** Military-to-civilian conversions continue to provide a valuable source to send additional Marines back to the operating force in support of our warfighting initiatives and help reduce stress. We will continue to pursue sensible conversions and transfer Marines from non-essential billets.

**National Security Personnel System.** The Marine Corps is committed to successful implementation of the National Security Personnel System. The Marine Corps is actively participating with the Department of Defense in the development and implementation of this new personnel system and is cooperating with the sister Services so that our civilian employees receive the training opportunities and support necessary for a successful transition. The National



Security Personnel System will enable the Marine Corps to better support the warfighter by providing a civilian workforce that is flexible, accountable, and aligned to the Marine Corps mission.

### **III. Resetting the force and preparing for the next contingency**

To meet the demands of the Long War, we must reset the force in order to simultaneously fight, train, and sustain our Corps. To support our Marines in combat, we have routinely drawn additional equipment from strategic stocks, which need to be replenished to remain responsive to emerging threats. The Congress has responded rapidly and generously to our requests for equipment and increased protection for our Marines and Sailors. It is our responsibility to manage these resources prudently as we transition to the modernization of our force.

**Equipment Readiness.** Extended combat operations have severely tested our materiel. While the vast majority of our equipment has passed the test of sustained combat operations, it has been subjected to more than a lifetime's worth of wear stemming from vehicle mileage, operating hours, and harsh environmental conditions. This increased maintenance requirement is a consequence of not only operational tempo and operating environments, but also the sheer amount of equipment employed in operations. Approximately thirty percent of all Marine Corps ground equipment and nearly twenty-five percent of our active duty aviation squadrons are currently engaged overseas. Most of this equipment is not rotating out of theater at the conclusion of each force rotation; it remains in combat, used on a near-continuous basis at an operating tempo that far exceeds normal peacetime usage.

As our priority for equipment is to support Marines serving in harm's way, we have drawn additional equipment from the Maritime Prepositioning Ships and prepositioned stores from the caves in Norway; we have also retained equipment in theater from units that are rotating back to the United States. The operational results of these efforts have been outstanding—the average mission capable rates of our deployed forces' ground equipment remain above ninety-three percent—but there is a price.

The cost of this success is a decrease in non-deployed unit readiness as well as an increase in the maintenance required per hour of operating time. Equipment across the Marine Corps is continuously cross-leveled and redistributed to ensure that units preparing to deploy have sufficient equipment to conduct our rigorous pre-deployment training programs. Because

the stateside priority of equipment distribution and readiness is to units preparing to deploy, there has been a trade-off in unit training for other types of contingencies. The timely delivery of replacement equipment is crucial to sustaining the high readiness rates for the Marines in theater, as well as improving the rates for the forces here at home. Although funded, much of this equipment is still many months from delivery.

**Ground Equipment.** Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan are placing demands on ground equipment far beyond what is typically experienced during training or home station operations. Some of these demands rise from higher usage rates, others from the rigors of extended operations in harsh environments. These higher demands increase the maintenance requirements for equipment employed in theater and continue when this equipment is redeployed to home stations.

<b>Absolute Increases in Utilization for Selected Marine Corps Systems Employed in OIF</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>Usage</b>		<b>Optempo Ratio</b>
	<b>Pre OIF</b>	<b>OIF</b>	
<b>HMMWV</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>MTVR</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>4.0</b>
<b>LVS</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>1500</b>	<b>4.0</b>
<b>AAV</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>5.0</b>
<b>Rotary-Wing Aircraft</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>2.2</b>
<b>KC-130</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>1.9</b>
NOTE: Usage rates for ground vehicles are in miles per month; aircraft in flight hours per month.			
<b>Table 1</b>			

For example, in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) crews are driving Light Armored Vehicles (LAVs) in excess of 8,700 miles per year—3.5 times more than programmed annual usage rates of 2,480 miles per year. Our tactical vehicle fleet is experiencing some of the most dramatic effects of excessive wear, operating at five to six times the programmed rates.

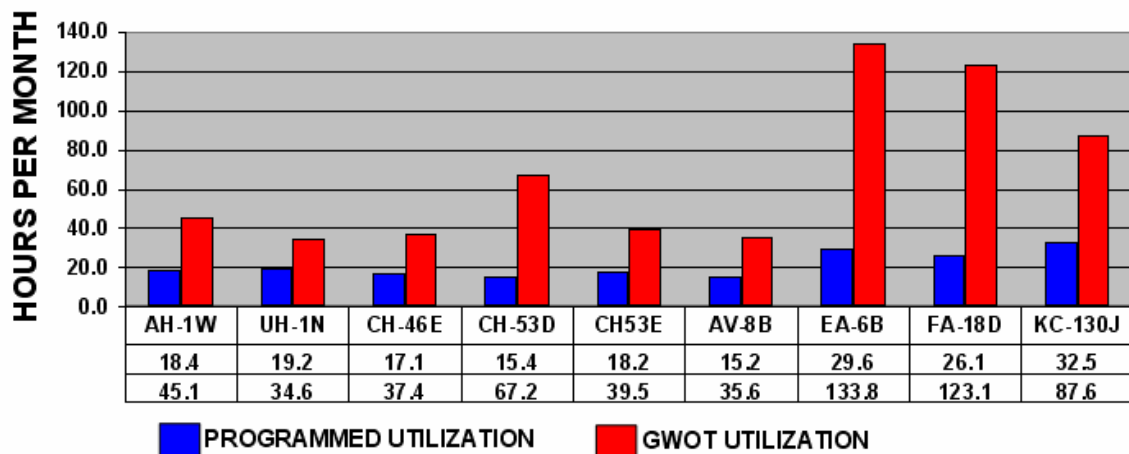
**Aviation Equipment.** The operationally demanding and harsh environments of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Djibouti have highlighted the limitations of our aging fleet of aircraft. In order to support our Marines, sister Services, and coalition partners successfully, our aircraft have been flying at two to three times their designed utilization rates. Despite this unprecedented utilization, the yeoman efforts of our maintenance and support personnel have sustained an aviation mission capable rate for deployed Marine aircraft at 79 percent over the past twelve

months. The corresponding aviation mission capable rates for our units in garrison, who have either recently returned from deployment or are preparing to deploy again, have averaged 75 percent over the past twelve months. To maintain sufficient numbers of aircraft in deployed squadrons, our home squadrons have taken significant cuts in available aircraft and parts as they prepare for deployment. Reset funding has partially alleviated this strain, but continued funding is needed as we continue to recapitalize our aircraft fleets due to age, attrition, and wartime losses. Maintaining the readiness of our aviation assets while preparing our aircrew for their next deployment is and will continue to be a monumental effort and constant challenge for our Marines.

We have mitigated aircraft degradation through specific aircraft modifications, proactive inspections, and additional maintenance actions enabled by reset programs. Sustaining aircraft material condition drives aircraft readiness and is the determining factor in combat aviation support provided to our Marines in harm's way. While these efforts have successfully bolstered aircraft reliability, sustainability, and survivability, additional requirements for depot level maintenance on airframes, engines, weapons, and support equipment will continue well beyond the conclusion of hostilities.

Resetting Marine Aviation means not merely repairing and replacing damaged or destroyed aircraft, but getting more capable and reliable aircraft into the operational deployment cycle sooner. Your Marines rely on these aircraft on a daily basis to provide a wide array of missions including casualty evacuation for our wounded and timely close air support for troops in contact with the enemy. Production lines to replace legacy aircraft lost in support of the Long

### AIRCRAFT UTILIZATION RATES



War are no longer active; therefore, it is urgent and imperative for the Marine Aviation Plan to remain fully funded and on schedule. Additionally, to ensure Marine aviation is postured to support the current needs of our country, the Marine Corps is working to restore war reserve aircraft and accelerate the upgrades of pre-production aircraft to help maintain aircraft inventories at minimal acceptable operating levels. For example, the Marine Corps is modifying pre-production MV-22s to ensure the transition schedule meets operational demands and deployment timelines. Resetting our full aviation capability will require a significant increase in programmed funding for repair, restoration, and upgrades of destroyed or damaged airframes, recovery of Pioneer unmanned aerial vehicle components, refurbishment of air traffic control equipment, replacement of targeting pods, and numerous other efforts to restore capability degraded in support of the Long War.

**Reset of Prepositioning Programs.** Eleven Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF) vessels from all three Maritime Prepositioning Force Squadrons (MPSRON) were downloaded and used in theater during initial Operation IRAQI FREEDOM operations. As these operations concluded, the Marine Corps reconstituted two of three MPSRONs to meet potential contingencies in other areas of the world. This reconstitution was conducted both in theater and at the USMC facilities in Jacksonville, Florida. In February 2004, MPSRON-2 was downloaded in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM II and has been partially reconstituted.

Since the MPF offloads in support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM I and II, MPSRON-1 and MPSRON-2 have gone through a complete maintenance cycle for attainment and supply rotation. Attainment for major end items is 91 percent and 48 percent respectively. Some of our major end item shortfalls are a result of ongoing Operation IRAQI FREEDOM / Operation ENDURING FREEDOM equipment requirements and availability from the manufacturer. Our end item shortfalls in the MPF program will be reset during the ship's maintenance cycle as equipment becomes available. Readiness for all equipment loaded aboard the MPS is historically 98 percent or better. MPSRON-3 is currently undergoing its maintenance cycle and we project an attainment above 98 percent for equipment when completed in June 2007. MPSRON-2's maintenance cycle should begin in April 2008 and be completed by June 2009.

Equipment from Marine Corps Prepositioning Program – Norway (MCPN) was used in support of Long War operations and to reset other Marine Corps shortfalls with a higher

operational priority. The USMC will reset MCPP-N as soon as practical in line with USMC operational priorities.

**Costs of Resetting the Force.** Last year, our cumulative reset cost estimate was \$11.7 billion, of which the Congress appropriated \$5.1 billion toward that amount. To date, Congress has appropriated a total of \$10.2 billion for GWOT reset costs. The \$11.7 figure is based on a point in time (1 October 2005) snapshot of the funding necessary to refit the Marine Corps to a pre-Long War level of equipment readiness. During the summer of 2006, the Secretary of Defense standardized the definition of reset costs across the Services. As a result, the Marine Corps stopped identifying two major expenses—depot maintenance and attrition losses—as “Cost of War” and moved them into our reset the force estimate. This definitional change and some additional requirements have changed our estimate as noted in Table 2.

The first expense to be re-categorized is the estimated cost of residual depot maintenance after the termination of hostilities. Our analysis shows that we will require at least four to six years of post-conflict depot maintenance to bring our force to a fully reset state. Given the status of our equipment at this time, we estimate additional programmed funding will be required for post-conflict ground and aviation depot maintenance costs.

The second item re-categorized because of definition changes is attrition losses. Prior to the re-definition, the Marine Corps had considered replacement and repair of attrition losses to be a cost of war, and had not included them in our reset estimate. We have increased our reset estimate to include forecasted attrition losses.

The net effect is that the Marine Corps reset estimate, once a fixed point in time estimate, has now become a rolling estimate that includes future attrition losses and future depot maintenance estimates. The following table (Table 2) depicts the definitional changes:

Changes to Reset Definition		
Category	Traditional Marine Corps	New OSD Definition
Depot Maintenance	Reset	Reset
Additional 4-6 yrs after OIF I	Not Included	Reset
Field Level Maintenance	Cost of War	Cost of War
Consumables	Cost of War	Cost of War
Combat Losses	Cost of War	Reset
Annually Expended Munitions	Cost of War	Cost of War
T/E Recapitalization	Reset	Reset
Prepositioning Assets	Reset	Reset

**Table 2**

Not all of the reset the force requirement can be executed in a single fiscal year. Some items such as attack and utility helicopters cannot be replaced until acquisition production decisions are made. Other requirements such as light armored vehicles cannot be fulfilled in a single year due to production capacity issues. Resourcing costs must be phased over several years. The table (Table 3) below highlights specific examples of this challenge.

Equipment Delivery Lag Time						
Capability	First Loss		Funding	Replacement		Delay* Months
	Equip	Date	Appropriated	Equip	Date	
Utility Helo	UH-1N	Dec 01	Oct 06	UH-1Y	Apr 09	88
Transport	KC-130R	Jan 02	Oct 06	KC-130J	Apr 10	99
Attack Helo	AH-1W	Jan 03	Oct 06	AH-1Z	Apr 09	75
Medium Lift Helo	CH-46E	Mar 03	Jul 06	MV-22	Sep 09	78
Wheeled Recon	LAV-25	Apr 03	May 05	LAV-25	Dec 07	56
Medium Wheeled Transport	MTVR	May 03	May 05	MTVR	Apr 06	35

**Table 3**

IV. Modernize for tomorrow, to be "the most ready when the Nation is least ready"

As prudent stewards of our Nation's resources, we must decide the most effective way to modernize the Total Force. We are actively working through the tough decisions of whether to replace aging equipment with similar platforms or to procure next generation capabilities—such as cutting edge platforms like the STOVL Joint Strike Fighter, the MV-22 Osprey, and the Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle (EFV). Foremost and throughout our modernization efforts, we will maintain our Congressionally mandated contingency response forces to be *always ready and always capable of forcible entry*.

**Marine Aviation Plan.** The Marine Aviation Plan is designed to posture Marine Corps Aviation for future warfighting requirements in the near term (2007-2009), the mid-term (2010-2012) and the long term (2013-2015). The Marine Aviation Plan addresses these challenges by restructuring the force and managing current aircraft procurement Programs of Record.

We will rebalance our existing Assault Support and Tactical Aircraft (TACAIR) structure in the reserve and active components in order to boost future HMH (heavy lift CH-53), HMLA (light attack UH-1 and AH-1), and VMU (unmanned aerial vehicle) capacity. Increases to aviation manpower structure at the squadron, group, and wing levels will enhance operational readiness and better posture these units for combat operations and their transitions to the new H-1s, MV-22, F-35, KC-130J, and CH-53K. We will incorporate a fully functional and resourced Aircrew Training System that will align a new Training Transformation Plan to each Assault Support and TACAIR community as they transition to new aircraft in the coming years. Marine aviation command and control modernization will leverage our new aircraft capabilities by streamlining command and control functions and radar inventory to ensure aviation command and control remains agile, efficient, and responsive to the needs of the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) across the spectrum of conflict. Marine aviation logistics process modernization applies an overarching approach to understanding readiness, related costs, and the removal of performance barriers with the goal of enhancing our warfighting capabilities while husbanding resources.

The Marine Aviation Plan shapes the future of Marine Aviation to meet the diverse missions of today's and tomorrow's battlefields, and provides the Marine Air Ground Task Force with improved capabilities, unit manning, and a thorough safety training system to better overcome known and foreseeable challenges. This plan sets in place tomorrow's Marine Aviation as a viable and efficient force in support of the MAGTF on the battlefield.

**Joint Strike Fighter.** F-35 development is on track, and will act as an integrated flying combat system in support of our ground forces and will be the centerpiece of Marine Aviation. The manufacture of the first test aircraft (Conventional Take-off and Landing [CTOL] variant) is well underway, assembly times are much better than planned, and exceptional quality has been demonstrated in fabrication and assembly. The first CTOL aircraft flew in December of 2006. Five STOVL and six CTOL aircraft are currently in production. The JSF acquisition strategy, including software development, reflects a block approach. The F-35B Short Take-Off / Vertical

Landing (STOVL) variant is a fifth generation aircraft that will provide a quantum leap in capability, basing flexibility, and mission execution across the full spectrum of warfare. The Marine Corps remains committed to its vision of an all STOVL tactical aircraft force. Fulfilling this vision will best posture the Marine Corps to support our Nation and the combatant commanders, by enabling the future Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) to accomplish its expeditionary warfighting responsibilities.

**MV-22.** The MV-22 is replacing the CH-46E and CH-53D aircraft. The CH-46E is over forty years old, with limited lift and mission capabilities to support the MAGTF and the Long War. In September 2005, the V-22 Defense Acquisition Board approved Full Rate Production. To date, twenty-nine Block A and fifteen Block B aircraft have been delivered. Much like the F-35, the MV-22 program uses a three-block strategy in its procurement. Block A aircraft are training aircraft. Block B are operational aircraft. Block C aircraft are operational aircraft with mission enhancements. To date, the one V-22 Fleet Replacement Training Squadron, one test squadron, VMX-22, and two tactical VMM squadrons have stood up with the third tactical MV-22 squadron scheduled for March 2007. MV-22 Initial Operational Capability is scheduled for the summer of 2007 with a continued transition of two CH-46E squadrons per year thereafter. The MV-22's revolutionary assault support capability allows the MAGTF to maximize our capstone concept of Expeditionary Maneuver Warfare. Our forces in harm's way deserve the best assault support aircraft in the world—without question, the MV-22 is that aircraft.

**KC-130J.** The KC-130J has continuously deployed in support of OIF since February 2005 and has provided the warfighter a state-of-the-art, multi-mission, tactical aerial refueling, and fixed wing assault support asset. The introduction of the aerial refuelable MV-22, combined with the forced retirement of the legacy KC-130F/R aircraft due to corrosion, fatigue life, and parts obsolescence, significantly increases the requirement for accelerated procurement of the KC-130J. Twenty-five new aircraft have been delivered, and the Marine Corps is contracted to procure a total of forty-five aircraft by the end of Fiscal Year 2013, with four KC-130J aircraft requested in the Fiscal Year 2008 budget. This is six aircraft less than the inventory objective of the fifty-one aircraft needed to support the operational requirements of MAGTF, joint, and combined forces. As the aviation workhorse of the MAGTF, the KC-130J's theater logistical support reduces the requirement for resupply via ground, limiting the exposure of our convoys to IEDs and other attacks.



**CH-53K.** The CH-53K program has reached "Milestone B" status-initiation of system development and demonstration. The current fleet of CH-53E Super Stallion aircraft will reach its fatigue life during this decade. The CH-53K will deliver increased range and payload, reduced operations and support costs, increased commonality with other assault support platforms, and digital interoperability for the next twenty-five years. The CH-53K is one of the elements that will enable the MAGTF and joint force to project and sustain forces ashore from the sea. A post Milestone B System Development and Demonstration contract was awarded in April 2006 and IOC is planned for Fiscal Year 2015.

**H-1 Upgrade.** The H-1 Upgrade Program (UH-1Y/AH-1Z) is a comprehensive program to resolve existing operational power margin issues, while significantly enhancing the tactical capability, operational effectiveness, and sustainability of the attack and utility helicopter fleet. The Corps' fleet of UH-1N Hueys is reaching the end of their useful life. Due to airframe and engine fatigue, the Vietnam-era Huey routinely takes off at maximum gross weight with no margin for error. This aircraft is long overdue for replacement; degrading our ability to support our Marines in harm's way. Due to significant GWOT operational demands on the existing squadrons and aircraft attrition, the Marine Corps has adapted the "build new" strategy for the UH-1Y in Fiscal Year 2006 and our first two production aircraft have now been delivered. We are also examining a "build new" strategy for the AH-1Z to preclude significant inventory shortfalls. The H-1 Upgrade Program will be restructured pending a Defense Acquisition Board in March 2007.

**Command and Control (C2) Harmonization.** The C2 harmonization strategy incorporates joint integrating concepts and C2 mandates, and is a holistic approach that integrates warfighter requirements into a common capability to deliver an end-to-end, fully integrated, cross-functional set of capabilities including forward-deployed and reach-back functions. The strategy's end state is a seamless capability that crosses warfighting functions and supports Marines from the supporting establishment to our Marines in contact with the enemy, taking the best of emerging capabilities and joint requirements to build a single solution.

The first step in this direction is the ongoing development of the Common Aviation Command and Control System (CAC2S). CAC2S fuses data from sensors, weapon systems, and C2 systems into an integrated display. It allows rapid, flexible operations in a common, modular, and scalable design by reducing the current five stovepipe systems into one hardware solution

with streamlined equipment training. CAC2S will enable MAGTF commanders to control timing of organic, joint, or coalition effects, assault support, and ISR in their battlespace while operating within a joint task force. With CAC2S and C2 harmonization, a joint task force commander will discover that his MAGTF's battlespace offers maximum flexibility due to its seamless integration with joint and coalition partners.

**Persistent Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance.** The Persistent Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance (ISR) strategy is a component of the Marine Corps ISR-enterprise supporting Marines across the spectrum of military operations. Its focus is the capability to integrate the network of air, ground, and space sensors with sufficient fidelity to detect, locate, identify, track, and target threats. This capability also reduces the effectiveness of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) through the identification of personnel, activities, and facilities associated with the manufacture and emplacement of IEDs. The network is enabled through unmanned aerial and ground systems, human intelligence exploitation teams, ground signals intelligence/electronic warfare, tactical fusion centers, and pre-deployment training programs. We continue to develop capabilities in coordination with the Joint IED Defeat Organization's point, route, and area targeting concepts. Some capabilities under development include unmanned aerial systems, unmanned ground sensors, wide field of view persistent surveillance (ANGEL FIRE), and the Ground Based Operational Surveillance System (GBOSS). ANGEL FIRE provides enhanced situational awareness and support to urban warfare, disaster relief, and other operations. The initial deployment of this capability is scheduled for late spring/summer 2007. G-BOSS is a force protection camera system that provides a twenty-four hour day/night persistent surveillance capability. The G-BOSS System of Systems concept is to integrate command and control; commercial off the shelf and government off the shelf sensors to ground, airborne, and space-based platforms. The military objective of G-Boss is to detect, identify, and track insurgent activities, specifically associated with the emplacement of IEDs. The initial employment of autonomous camera tower systems has performed admirably in theater. The integration of a fully networked G-BOSS system of systems is anticipated to begin in spring/summer 2007.

**Ground Mobility.** The Army and Marine Corps are leading the Services in developing tactical wheeled vehicle requirements for the joint force. The defined capabilities reflect an appropriate balance in survivability, mobility, payload, network enabling, transportability, and

sustainability for the light tactical wheeled vehicle supporting the future joint force. The Army/Marine Corps Board has proven a valuable forum for coordination of tactical wheeled vehicle development and fielding, the production of Central Command armoring kits and up-armored HMMWVs, and rapid response to Combatant Commander's requests for Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles. Additionally, the Army/Marine Corps Board has been the focal point for development of the joint requirements for a Joint Light Tactical Vehicle focused on providing protected, sustained, networked, and expeditionary mobility to the joint force in the light tactical vehicle weight class.

**Mine Resistant Ambush-protected (MRAP) vehicles.** MRAP vehicles are designed with a "V" shaped hull and are employed to protect against the three primary kill mechanisms of mines and improvised explosive devices—fragmentation, blast overpressure, and acceleration. These vehicles provide the best available protection against improvised explosive devices and experiences in theater have shown that a Marine is four to five times safer in a MRAP than in an up-armored HMMWV. There will be three categories of new near-term MRAP vehicles. Category I, a Mine Resistant Utility Vehicle, will accommodate up to six personnel and will be employed in urban operations. Category II vehicles are similar to Cougar/Joint Explosive Ordnance Disposal Rapid Response Vehicles, and will accommodate up to ten personnel, and will be multi-mission capable. Category III, Buffalo vehicles, will be used for route clearance and explosive ordnance disposal missions.

The MRAP is an example of our adaptation to evolving threats. It is an attempt to acquire the very best technology available in the shortest amount of time in order to protect our Marines. The USMC requirement is 3,700 MRAP vehicles and we are aggressively pursuing the acquisition of this rapidly emerging requirement.

**Joint Light Tactical Vehicle (JLTV).** In November 2006, the Army's Training and Doctrine Command and Marine Corps Combat Development Command, in collaboration with Navy, Air Force, and Special Operations Command representatives, received Joint Staff approval of the Ground Combat Forces Light Tactical Mobility Initial Capability Document, documenting joint forces' capability needs for the light tactical wheeled vehicle fleet. During December 2006, Army and Marine Corps combat developers staffed the JLTV Capability Development Document, defining requirements for the long-term HMMWV replacement.

**Marine Personnel Carrier (MPC).** MPC development is on schedule. In January 2007, the Marine Corps staffed the Initial Capabilities Document, framed the Capabilities Development Document and initiated planning for the Analysis of Alternatives leading to a Marine Personnel Carrier material solution, moving toward an Initial Operational Capability in the 2012 timeframe. The MPC will possess a balance between performance, protection, and payload and will increase infantry battalion protected mobility and light armored reconnaissance battalion striking power. It will serve as a balanced expeditionary armored personnel carrier easily optimized for irregular warfare, but effective across the range of military operations.

**M1114 HMMWV– Upgrade via Fragmentation Kit 2 and Fragmentation Kit 5.** The Corps' already fielded M1114 fleet is undergoing an upgrade with Fragmentation Kits 2 and 5. Fragmentation Kit 2 enhances ballistic protection in the front driver and assistant driver wheel-well. Fragmentation Kit 5 degrades improvised explosive device effects and reduces armor debris that results from overmatch. Installation of both Fragmentation Kits is underway, with anticipated completion in March 2007. We will continue to evaluate the U.S. Army's objective kit development and share information and lessons learned. All new Marine Corps deliveries of M1114, M1151, M1152, and M1165 HMMWV's will have Fragmentation Kits 2 and 5 level capability integrated.

**MAGTF Fires.** Several innovative systems related to fire support significantly enhance the warfighting efficiency and effectiveness of the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF). Such systems include the M777 Lightweight Howitzer, High Mobility Artillery Rocket System, Expeditionary Fire Support System, Advanced Field Artillery Tactical Data System, and the Target Location, Designation, and Handoff system.

**M777 Lightweight Howitzer.** The new M777 lightweight howitzer replaces the M198 howitzers. It can be lifted by the MV-22 Osprey and the CH-53E helicopter and is paired with the Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacement truck for improved cross-country mobility. The M777, through design innovation, navigation, positioning aides, and digital fire control, offers significant improvements in lethality, survivability, mobility, and durability over the M198 howitzer. The Marine Corps began fielding the first of 356 new howitzers to the operating forces in April 2005 and expects to complete fielding in calendar year 2009.

**High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS).** The HIMARS fills a critical range and volume gap in Marine Corps fire support assets by providing 24-hour, all weather, ground-

based, indirect precision and volume fires throughout all phases of combat operations ashore. We will field forty HIMARS (eighteen to the active component, eighteen to the reserve component, and four to the Supporting Establishment). When paired with the acquisition of Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System rockets, HIMARS will provide a highly responsive, precision fire capability to our forces in conventional as well as unconventional operations.

**Expeditionary Fire Support System (EFSS).** The EFSS will be the principal indirect fire support system for the vertical assault element of MAGTFs executing Ship-to-Objective Maneuver. It is a towed 120mm mortar and when paired with an internally transportable vehicle, will be transported aboard MV-22 and CH-53E aircraft. EFSS-equipped units will provide the ground component of a vertical assault element with immediately responsive, organic indirect fires at ranges beyond current infantry battalion mortars. Initial operational capability is planned during calendar year 2007, and full operational capability is planned for Fiscal Year 2010.

**Target Location, Designation, and Handoff System (TLDHS).** TLDHS is a modular, man-portable equipment suite that will provide the ability to quickly acquire targets and digitally transmit data to supporting arms elements for attack, as well as designate targets for laser-seeking precision guided munitions and laser spot trackers. The system will be capable of providing target location within fifty meters and designating targets at 5000 meters. TLDHS will be fielded to forward observer teams, naval gunfire spot teams, tactical air control parties, and reconnaissance teams. Block II, scheduled for fielding in late Fiscal Year 2007, will communicate with all Naval Strike aircraft, the AFATDS, and the Naval Fire Control System.

**Counter-Sniper technology.** The Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory is leading a four-pronged approach to counter the sniper threat. Focused on increasing our ability to sense and warn, deny, protect, and respond, we are leveraging the cooperative efforts of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, our sister Services, the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, and the National Ground Intelligence Center.

Future sense and warn capabilities may include optical, acoustic, and infrared detection and location. We are examining different obscurant technologies, while our protection effort focuses on improving individual armor and new tactics, techniques, and procedures. Detection of threat optics will provide indications and warning of impending sniper or IED attacks, and a predictive capability to avoid or engage prior to sustaining friendly casualties. One potential denial method is through use of glare aversion devices which apply a non-injurious, but

discomforting, bright light. Assessment of the response can help determine hostile intent, and the glare aversion effect may be effective in prohibiting a sniper from visually targeting friendly forces. Our response capability efforts include examination of counter-sniper vehicles and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency's sniper rifle program. Finally, we are using experimentation to combat the sniper threat through advanced equipment and improved tactics, techniques, and procedures. Ongoing joint and interagency cooperation, coupled with industry collaboration, will shape our future experiments.

**Secure Internet Routing Protocol Network.** The continuing evolution and maturation of network threats, along with the asynchronous nature of network intrusions and vulnerabilities, requires the Marine Corps to seek improvements in network defense. The Secure Internet Routing Protocol Network, SIPRNET, is a highly secure network, physically and logically separate from unclassified networks and the Internet. In the near future, we foresee greater reliance on the SIPRNET to enhance the security of Marine Corps war fighting and business operations. This effort will require additional resources, which will prove well worth the investment as we secure our networks and provide for better operational and force protection.

## **V. Naval Operating Forces and Concepts**

As the "Arc of Instability" is substantially a maritime domain, a naval force is uniquely suited to respond and provide forward-deployed expeditionary combat forces in response to crises. It is the Marine Corps' obligation to provide our Nation a naval force that is fully prepared for employment as a Marine Air Ground Task Force operating across the spectrum of conflict. The Nation invests tremendous resources knowing that the ability to project power from the sea is a prerequisite for defending our sovereignty. To maneuver from the freedom of the seas provides timely and reliable response solutions to our Nation. In concert with the US Navy, we support the law of the sea convention, which preserves our ability to maneuver from the sea.

As demonstrated by the Navy-Marine Corps responses to hurricanes Katrina and Rita, tsunami relief in southern Asia, and noncombatant evacuation operations in Lebanon, maneuvering from the sea is a relevant capability possessing the flexibility to meet our country's needs both around the world and at home. Marines and Sailors embarked from amphibious platforms provide asymmetric, sustainable, and rapidly responsive solutions to our Combatant Commanders.

Working closely with our Navy and Coast Guard partners, we will advance the amphibious and expeditionary capabilities the Combatant Commanders rely on to meet their emerging challenges, strengthen concepts and training that enhance naval contributions to the Long War, and provide a naval force that is fully prepared for employment across the full spectrum of conflict.

**Concepts to Capabilities.** In September 2006, the Navy and Marine Corps published a new *Naval Operations Concept (NOC)*, which provides our unified vision for the future and broadly describes how naval power and influence can be applied at and from the sea, across the littorals, and ashore. In tandem, we revised our *Marine Corps Operating Concepts (MOC) for a Changing Security Environment*, incorporating our lessons learned and the unified vision provided in the NOC. Building on the conceptual foundation for littoral power projection provided in *Operational Maneuver from the Sea*, the Naval and Marine Corps Operating Concepts call for more widely distributed forces to provide increased forward presence, security cooperation with an expanding set of international partners, preemption of non-traditional threats, and a global response to crisis in spite of challenges to access. Collectively, these concepts provide the foundation for selectively conducting either distributed or aggregated operations.

Due to changes to the security environment and the effects of globalization, the Navy, Coast Guard, and Marine Corps have all concurred with the need to reexamine our maritime strategy. Early this summer, we intend to produce a new maritime strategy in order to articulate the ways and means by which maritime forces will support the Nation's strategic ends in the new security era.

**Amphibious Warfare Ships.** Amphibious warfare ships are the centerpiece of the Navy-Marine Corps' forcible entry and Seabasing capability, and have played an essential role in the Long War. These ships are equipped with aviation and surface assault capabilities, which coupled with their inherent survival and self-defense systems, makes them ideally suited to support a broad range of mission requirements. This survivability is critical to ensure the Nation has the widest range of response options. Not only must our naval forces maintain the ability to rapidly close, decisively employ, and effectively sustain Marines from the sea, they must also respond to emerging Long War requirements, crisis response, and humanitarian assistance missions on short notice around the world.

For forcible entry, the Marine Corps' requirement is a single, simultaneously-employed two Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) assault capability. One MEB requires seventeen amphibious warfare ships; however, given the fiscally constrained environment, the Navy and Marine Corps have agreed to assume risk by only using fifteen. Historical amphibious ship availability rates dictate a minimum of eleven ships of each of the current types of amphibious ship—a minimum of thirty-three total ships—resulting in a Battle Force that provides thirty *operationally available* amphibious warfare ships. In that Battle Force, ten aviation-capable big deck ships (LHA/LHD/LHA(R)) and ten LPD 17 class ships are required to accommodate the MEB's aviation combat element.

**Amphibious Transport Dock (LPD).** The LPD 17 *San Antonio* class of amphibious warfare ships represents the Department of the Navy's commitment to a modern expeditionary power projection fleet that will enable our naval force to operate across the spectrum of warfare. The Navy took delivery of the first LPD 17 in the summer of 2005 and operational evaluation is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2007. The LPD 17 class replaces four classes of older ships—the LKA, LST, LSD 36, and the LPD 4—and will have a forty-year expected service life. LPD 17 class ships will play a key role in supporting the ongoing Long War by forward deploying Marines and their equipment to respond to crises abroad. Its unique design will facilitate expanded force coverage and decreased reaction times of forward deployed Marine Expeditionary Units. In forcible entry operations, the LPD 17 will help maintain a robust surface assault and rapid off-load capability for the Marine Air Ground Task Force far into the future.

**Amphibious Assault Ship (Replacement) (LHA(R)).** The *Tarawa* class amphibious assault ships reach the end of their service life during the next decade (2011-2015). An eighth *Wasp* class LHD (multi-purpose amphibious assault ship) is under construction and will replace one *Tarawa* class ship during Fiscal Year 2008. In order to meet future warfighting requirements and fully capitalize on our investment in the MV-22 and Joint Strike Fighter, ships with enhanced aviation capabilities will replace the remaining LHA ships. These ships will provide enhanced hangar and maintenance spaces to support aviation maintenance and increased jet fuel storage and aviation ordnance magazines. The lead ship, LHA 6, is on track for detailed design and construction contract award during Fiscal Year 2007, with advanced procurement funds already provided in the Fiscal Year 2005 and 2006 budgets.



**The Maritime Prepositioning Force.** Our proven Maritime Prepositioning Force—capable of supporting the rapid deployment of three Marine Expeditionary Brigades—is an important complement to our amphibious warfare capability. Combined, these capabilities provide the Marine Corps the ability to rapidly react to a crisis in a number of potential theaters and the flexibility to employ forces across the battlespace. The natural progression of this capability set, the Maritime Prepositioning Force (Future) (MPF(F)), is a key enabler of Seabasing and will build on the success of the legacy Maritime Prepositioning Force program. MPF(F) will provide support to a wide range of military operations with capabilities such as at-sea arrival and assembly, selective offload of specific mission sets, and long-term, sea-based sustainment. The squadron will be capable of prepositioning the Marine Expeditionary Brigade’s critical equipment and sustainment; but this capability does not constitute a forcible entry capability. The MPF(F) squadron composition decision was made by the Acting Secretary of the Navy in May 2005; the program is currently in the technology development phase of acquisition, with a Milestone B decision planned in Fiscal Year 2008.

**High Speed Connectors.** High-speed connectors will facilitate the conduct of sustained sea-based operations by expediting force closure and allowing the persistence necessary for success in the littorals. Connectors are grouped into three categories: inter-theater, the Joint High Speed Sealift (JHSS), which provides strategic force closure for CONUS-based forces; intra-theater, the Joint High Speed Vessel (JHSV) that enables rapid closure of Marine forces and sustainment; and the Joint Maritime Assault Connector, to move troops and resources from the sea base to shore. These platforms will link bases and stations around the world to the sea base and other advanced bases, as well as provide linkages between the sea base and forces operating ashore.

**Ship-to-Shore Mobility.** For decades, Marine power projection has included a deliberate buildup of combat power ashore. Only after naval forces fought ashore and established a beachhead would the MAGTF begin to focus its combat power on the joint force’s operational objective. Advances in mobility, fires, and sustainment capabilities will enable greater penetration and exploitation operations from over the horizon, by both air and surface means, with forces moving rapidly to operational objectives without stopping to seize, defend, and build up beachheads or landing zones. The Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle, MV-22 Osprey, and CH-

53K heavy lift helicopter are critical to achieving the necessary forcible entry capabilities of the future.

**Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle.** The Marine Corps provides the Nation's joint warfighting forces with a unique, flexible, and effective capability to conduct forcible entry operations from the sea. The Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle (EFV), the Corps' largest ground combat system acquisition program, is the sole ground combat vehicle that enables projection of combat power from a sea base. It will replace the aging Assault Amphibious Vehicle that has been in service since 1972 and will become a complementary component of our modernized fleet of tactical vehicles that include the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle, the Marine Personnel Carrier, and the Internally Transportable Vehicle. The EFV's amphibious mobility, day and night lethality, enhanced force protection capabilities, and robust communications will help the joint force meet security challenges across the spectrum of conflict. The over-the-horizon capability of the EFV will also enable amphibious ships to increase their standoff distance, no longer requiring them to close within the striking distance of many coastal defense systems in order to launch their amphibious assault platforms. The EFV will be specifically well suited to maneuver operations conducted from the sea and sustained operations in the world's littoral regions.

The Marine Corps recently conducted a demanding operational assessment of the EFV. It successfully demonstrated most critical performance requirements, but the design complexities are still providing challenges to system reliability. To that end, we conducted a comprehensive requirements review to ensure delivery of the required capability while reducing complexity of the system where possible. For example, the human stresses encountered during operations in some high sea states required us to reevaluate the operational necessity of exposing Marines to those conditions. Based upon this review, and a subsequent engineering design review, we will tailor final requirements and system design to support forcible entry concepts while ensuring the EFV is a safe, reliable, and effective combat vehicle.

**Supporting Capabilities.** Logistics Modernization is the largest coordinated and cross-organizational effort ever undertaken to transform Marine Corps logistics. A three-pronged improvement and integration initiative focusing on Marine Corps personnel, processes, and technology, Logistics Modernization is integrating and streamlining supply, maintenance, and distribution. As our roadmap for more effective and efficient expeditionary logistics, Logistics

Modernization is multiplying our ability to support the Marine Air Ground Task Force across the spectrum of conflict, in all environments and across all levels of theater maturity.

## **VI. Beyond the Horizon—Posturing the Marine Corps for the Future**

History has proven that we cannot narrowly define the conditions for which our military must be ready. With little warning, our Nation has repeatedly called its Corps front and center—in the southern Pacific after Pearl Harbor, in Korea after the communist invasion in 1950, in the mountains of Afghanistan after 9/11, and in southern Asia in the wake of the catastrophic tsunami of 2004. Each of these strategic surprises demonstrates the broad range of possibilities for which the Marine Corps must be prepared.

The Long War requires a multi-dimensional force that is well trained and educated for employment in all forms of warfare. Historically, our Corps has produced respected leaders who have demonstrated intellectual agility in warfighting. Our current deployment tempo increasingly places our Professional Military Education (PME) programs at risk. No level of risk is acceptable if it threatens the steady flow of thinkers, planners, and aggressive commanders who can execute effectively across the entire spectrum of operations.

**The Future of Training and Education.** Looking ahead to the challenges of the Long War, we have enhanced our counterinsurgency capabilities while remaining vigilant that our Marine Air Ground Task Forces must remain ready to launch robust forcible entry operations and succeed across the spectrum of conflict with our naval partner. With Marine forces so closely engaged in an irregular fight, we will have to take extraordinary steps to retain this ability to serve as the Nation’s shock troops during major conventional combat operations. Your support of our training and education needs will allow us to remain faithful to our enduring mission: to be where the country needs us, when she needs us, and to prevail over whatever challenges we face.

**The Training Continuum.** Some things remain constant—we continue to ensure that all Marines, regardless of occupational specialty, gain the self-confidence and skills derived from our warrior ethos “Every Marine a Rifleman.” The experience at boot camp remains legendary; this transformation of young Americans is a national treasure—one that we must preserve and guard carefully. The core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment—imprinted on their souls during recruit training and strengthened thereafter—mark a Marine’s character for a lifetime. To

reinforce this transformation, we have focused the emphasis of our officer and enlisted professional military education on combat leadership.

Marine training is built along a continuum that is well defined, well structured, and of which we are extremely proud. Marines are forged in the furnace of recruit training and tempered by shared hardship and tough training. This transformation process begins the day they meet their recruiter, who introduces them to the concept of total fitness: body, mind, and spirit. It continues through their common experiences at Recruit Training and its Crucible, and Marine Combat Training. It moves on to skill training at one of our schools or at a sister Service school. It culminates with assignment to an operational unit with its own demanding training, where a powerful bond of trust develops between fellow warriors as they experience the rigors of combat against a diverse and adaptive foe.

**The Infantry Battalion Enhancement Period Program (IBEPP).** Long War operations have significantly increased our training requirements. Marines must now train to a broader range of skills; however, due to high operational tempo, we face ever-decreasing timetables for Marines to achieve mastery of these skills. Our first major initiative to maximize effective use of available time was the establishment of a standardized and well-defined Pre-deployment Training Program. To bolster home station training, we took an additional step by establishing the Infantry Battalion Enhancement Period Program (IBEPP). The primary goal of the IBEPP is to facilitate better small unit leader training within the infantry battalion. Highlights of the IBEPP include expanded quotas for rifle squad leader courses (sergeants) and a new tactical small unit leader course focused on fire team leaders (corporals). Additionally, we have updated our School of Infantry curriculum to incorporate the additional equipment added to our new infantry battalion table of equipment and increased the instructor base at our Schools of Infantry to support the new IBEPP.

**Expansion of our Weapons and Tactics Training Program.** We find ourselves in a cycle of rapid innovation of weapons and tactics with our enemies. This cycle challenges the creativity and knowledge of staff officers in our ground and combat logistics battalions who must direct training programs or staff combat operations. Our aviation squadrons experienced this during the Vietnam conflict. To address those challenges, we created the Weapons and Tactics Training Program to develop and field a cadre of aviators with advanced understanding of weapon and tactical innovations as well as the concepts and requirements to train other aviators

to adapt to these trends. This program placed prestige on training expertise and now provides an effective means by which Marine Aviation stays current on battlefield innovations. We will soon apply the fundamentals of that program to our ground staffs. The ground and logistics Weapons and Tactics Training Program will produce ground Marines expert in training and warfighting functions who will improve their units' ability to fight. Though we are assessing detailed requirements, we anticipate this effort could require up to 150 instructors, and increased demands on combined arms ranges, artillery and aviation units, simulation centers, and suites of operations center equipment.

**Marine Corps Lessons Learned Management System.** This adaptive enemy requires us to have a responsive and collaborative dialogue across the Corps. Our interactive and effective lessons management system promptly captures and disseminates the lessons being learned by our Marines and Sailors in complex combat actions around the globe. Our web-based lesson input support tool—selected by the Joint Staff last year to serve as the Department standard—guides this learning process. Capitalizing on the institutional agility that has been a hallmark of our success, last year we implemented changes in such areas as crew-served weapons use, tactical questioning, evidence gathering procedures, command and control equipment training and procedures, civil-military operations, and detainee handling.

**Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning.** An example of adaptation for the Long War includes our Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning, which we established during May 2005 and recently reached its full operational capability. Both officer and enlisted Marines now receive education in the operational aspects of culture at nearly every phase of their career development. This year, the Center is establishing Language Learning Resource Centers at our eight largest bases and stations. These centers provide language instruction using mobile language training shelters and contracted professional language trainers. These efforts support the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap increasing our interoperability with partner nations around the globe. We are also expanding our Foreign Area Officer program, creating language and culture experts from all occupational specialties who can be integrated into Marine units deployed worldwide. We thank the Congress for its support in this venture, as recent supplemental funding has proved instrumental to this effort.

**Advisor Training.** During 2006, we institutionalized the structure, resources, and equipment to advance the individual skills and education of Marines selected to serve as advisors

to partner military units. Our Security Cooperation and Education Training Center had already trained over fifty deploying advisor teams during 2004 and 2005. This formal establishment allowed us to increase our efforts, as we trained seventy-seven advisor teams during 2006. Additionally, we expanded advisor skills with upgrades to training in such areas as foreign weapon handling, medical procedures and survival, evasion, resistance, and escape. This year we are establishing a Civil Military Operations Center of Excellence within this Center, as the Marine Corps' focal agency for civil-military operations training and education.

**Training Marine Air Ground Task Forces.** Our continuing adaptations and investments in Core Values are checked once more prior to deployment with a series of unit mission rehearsals. These exercises occur during the culminating block of our formal Pre-deployment Training Program, which we expanded during 2004 to serve all deploying Marine Air Ground Task Forces. These mission rehearsals present all deploying personnel with increasingly complex situations designed to replicate the confusing swirl of combat on a complex battlefield. Role players, many of whom are Iraqi-Americans, portray battlefield civilians and insurgents alike, presenting exercise-worn Marines with sudden “shoot-don't shoot” decisions and forging within our Marines a sense of common cause with the civilians they will soon protect. The culmination of our pre-deployment training consists of three distinct exercises: Mojave Viper, Desert Talon, and Mountain Warrior—each specifically tailored to the deploying unit's destination combat environment.

During 2006, we continued to modify this program with expanded training in force escalation and with increased integration of logistics combat units. To better prepare Marines to counter the threat of improvised explosive devices, we added more training devices, built new ranges, and employed electronic warfare specialists at our rehearsal sites. This year we are focusing our enhancements on the training of advisor teams and of Marine Air Ground Task Force staffs by increasing the use of simulation. Our planned improvements promise to deliver Marine forces ready to more effectively meet the emerging challenges faced by the Combatant Commanders as a naval force in readiness in joint, combined, and interagency operations.

**Modernization of Training Ranges.** With the support of the Congress, we also recently began the most ambitious modernization of our training ranges since World War II. From larger and more realistic urban training facilities to increased opportunities to evaluate advanced air-ground coordination, we have significantly improved the realism, safety, and capacity of our

ranges and training areas. While our immediate focus has been to acquire infrastructure and modern technology, our long-term investment is in people, largely civilian, to both operate and maintain these facilities and to form the critical training cadres capable of maintaining the realism our Marine Air Ground Task Forces require. Your continued support of our range modernization efforts, as well as the support for the Department's programs to ensure future access to adequate sea, air, and land space for our training ranges, remains vital to our ability to prepare for the challenges of the future with our joint, coalition, and interagency partners.

**Marine Aviation Training Systems Program.** The Aviation Training Systems Program (ATSP) plans, executes, and manages Marine Aviation Training to achieve individual and unit combat readiness through standardized training across all aviation core competencies. Through the ATSP, Marine Aviation develops aircraft systems that enhance operational readiness, improve safety through greater standardization, and significantly reduce the life cycle cost of maintaining and sustaining aircraft.

**Core Values and Ethics Training.** During this past year, we also reviewed our efforts to instill in Marines those core values necessary to guide them correctly through the complex ethical demands of armed conflict. We have ensured that every Marine, at every phase of the training continuum, studies ethical leadership, the Law of War, escalation of force, and Rules of Engagement. Our entry-level training first presents these concepts in the classroom, and then tests for proper application of these principles under stressful field exercises. We further reinforce confident, ethical decision-making through the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program that teaches our Core Values and presents ethical scenarios pertaining to restraint and proper escalation of force as the foundation of its curriculum. We imbue our Marines with the mindset that “wherever we go, everyone is safer because a US Marine is there.”

**Building Esprit and Warrior Pride.** The Marine Corps dress blue uniform is as legendary as the Marines who wear it. However, while this well-known uniform is one of the most admired uniforms in the world, owning one is out of the reach of most enlisted Marines—it simply costs too much for them to buy on their own.

No Marine should be denied the honor of wearing this symbol of more than two centuries of bravery and sacrifice. Therefore, I have ordered that every Marine recruit now be issued a dress blue uniform before they graduate from Boot Camp, and all enlisted Marines are to receive

an appropriate clothing allowance so that they are able to purchase and maintain a dress blue uniform. They have earned this privilege.

## **VII. Improve the Quality of Life for our Marines and our Families**

**Enhancing Individual Survivability—Personal Protective Equipment.** The Corps will continue to pursue technological advancements in personal protective equipment—our Marines deserve nothing less. Fully recognizing the trade-off between weight, protection, fatigue, and movement restriction, we are providing Marines the latest in personal protective equipment—such as the Modular Tactical Vest, Quad Guard, Lightweight Helmet, and Flame Resistant Organizational Gear.

**Body Armor.** Combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have highlighted a need to evolve our personal protective vest system. Therefore, in February, we started transitioning to a newly designed Modular Tactical Vest or MTV. This vest is virtually the same weight as its predecessor, the Outer Tactical Vest, but it more easily integrates our other personal protection systems. It provides greater comfort through the incorporation of state-of-the-art load carriage techniques that better distributes the combat load over the torso and onto the hips of the Marine. The acquisition objective for the Modular Tactical Vest is 60,000 systems, with anticipated completion of deliveries in December 2007. The MTV also incorporates our existing Enhanced Small Arms Protective Inserts, or E-SAPI, and Side SAPI plates. These plates are currently provided to every Marine in theater. The E-SAPI provides the best protection available against a wide variety of small arms threats, to include protection against 7.62mm ammunition threats.

**QuadGard.** The QuadGard system is designed to provide ballistic protection for a Marine's arms and legs when serving as a gunner on convoy duty. This system, which integrates with other personal ballistic protection equipment such as the Modular Tactical Vest, Enhanced SAPI, and Lightweight Helmet, reduces minimum standoff distances from the Marine to ballistic threats, particularly improvised explosive device fragmentation.

**Lightweight Helmet.** We are committed to providing the best head protection available to our warfighters. The Lightweight Helmet weighs less than its predecessor, and provides a high level of protection against fragmentation threats and 9mm bullets. We now require use of the pad system as study results demonstrated it provides greater protection against non-ballistic blunt trauma than the sling suspension system. We are retrofitting more than 150,000 helmets with the



pad system and have already fielded enough helmet pads for every deployed Marine. Beginning in January, all Lightweight Helmets produced by the manufacturer are now delivered with the approved pad system installed.

**Flame Resistant Organizational Gear (FROG).** In February, we began fielding FROG to all deployed and deploying Marines. This life saving ensemble of clothing items – gloves, balaclava, long-sleeved fire resistant shirt, combat shirt, and combat trouser – is designed to mitigate potential injuries to our Marines from flame exposure. These clothing items provide protection that is comparable to that of the NOMEX combat vehicle crewman suit/flight suit.

With this mix of body armor, undergarments, and outerwear, operational commanders can determine what equipment their Marines will employ based upon mission requirements and environmental conditions.

**Taking Care of our Marines and Their Families.** Just as every Marine makes a commitment to the Corps and the Nation when they earn the title Marine, we make an enduring commitment to every Marine and Marine family. Marines are renowned for “taking care of our own.” Part of taking care of our own means we will provide for Marines and their families through appropriate pay and compensation, housing, health care, infrastructure, and community services. Strong Congressional support for many Administration initiatives has made possible the significant investments required to improve each of the components of quality of life. This support requires continuous assessment to ensure that it is both sufficient and relevant, particularly during war. These programs must be on a wartime footing to seamlessly sustain our Marines and their families for the duration—long past the redeployment of our Marines and Sailors.

We are scrutinizing the support for our Marines and their families to ensure our family support programs remain on a wartime footing—particularly those that assist in integrating civilian, military, charitable, and Veterans Affairs programs. This support targets both Marines who suffer from the physical costs of this war, and those who carry unseen scars—those suffering from Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). As I testified in my confirmation hearing, I feel strongly that these wounds of war should be characterized as any other wound—and our commitment to those Marines who suffer from these ailments will not falter.

We continue to aggressively monitor post-deployment mental health screenings, suicides, domestic violence, and divorce rates. Marine commanders and noncommissioned officers at every level are charged to monitor these indications closely and to stay engaged on these issues. Our Casualty Assistance, Marine For Life, and Combat / Operational Stress Control Program continue to be the frontline of support to our wartime efforts.

**Casualty Assistance.** Each fallen Marine is a tragic loss to the survivors, the Corps, and our Nation. We endeavor to honor their sacrifices with sincerity and commitment. Our Casualty Assistance Calls Officers are trained to treat next of kin and other family members as they would their own family. Rendering casualty assistance begins with the basic tenet that there is no standard casualty call; each case is distinct, as families grieve in different ways. Assistance to surviving families is individually tailored to facilitate their transition through the stages of grief and the completion of the casualty assistance process.

**Wounded Warrior Regiment.** While the support to our Marine Corps and families has been exceptional, I intend to increase this support through the creation of a Wounded Warrior Regiment. This new regimental headquarters will provide centralized oversight of the care for our wounded Marines and assist in the integration of their support with military, Department of Veterans Affairs, charitable, and civilian systems. The regiment will have a battalion headquarters on each coast, commanded by officers personally selected by me. My criteria for this leadership will be rigorous, as I will seek to select only those officers with previous command experience. My staff is reviewing the fiscal program requirements for this unit now—to include facilities, manning, and support requirements. I view this initiative as a personal priority to fulfill our commitment to these valiant Americans.

**Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).** As the quality of individual combat armor has increased, so have the number of blast survivors and Marines with Traumatic Brain Injury. Mild to moderate traumatic brain injuries can be difficult to diagnose and yet can cause changes in personality, cognition, and memory that significantly impair a service member's ability to make the life and death decisions required of them while in a combat environment. TBI and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) have many symptoms in common, and TBI can co-occur with PTSD. Recent measures to mitigate the impact of traumatic brain injuries to individual Marines and their units include the release of a medical guidance letter from the Medical Officer of the Marine Corps outlining proper diagnosis and treatment strategies.

**Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).** The science of diagnosing and treating Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder continues to evolve. The Marine Corps Combat Development Command, Training and Education Command, Naval Health Research Center, and others are studying ways to identify risk and protective factors for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and to increase our resilience to stress. By improving the awareness of both individuals and our leaders, we can provide early identification and psychological first aid to those who are stress-injured. Better screening and referral of at-risk Marines is underway via pre- and post-deployment standard health assessments that specifically screen for mental health problems. Navy Medicine has established new Deployment Health Centers with additional mental health providers readily available to treat Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and other combat stress injuries. The Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense have established comprehensive guidelines for managing Post-Traumatic Stress, which are available to all services. The Marine Corps, Navy Medicine, and Veterans Affairs have coordinated a Seamless Transition program to help our Marine veterans move smoothly into the Veterans Affairs treatment system to get the help they need and deserve. In addition, Veterans Affairs Readjustment Centers at 209 communities around the country now provide mental health services for eligible active and discharged veterans and their families.

**Combat/Operational Stress Control (COSC).** Battlefields are familiar territory for Marines—we train Marines to excel in chaotic and unpredictable surroundings. Yet all Marines will experience combat/operational stress to some extent, as transient symptoms for most, but as persistent stress injuries for others. Managing combat stress is vital to the operation of the Marine Corps as a fighting force and the long-term health and well-being of Marines and their families. All deploying Marines receive warrior preparation, transition briefs, and health assessments. In addition, mental health professionals or specially trained medical officers brief Marine leaders on the prevention and management of adverse stress reactions. We have also implemented the innovative Operational Stress Control and Readiness (OSCAR) program, which embeds mental health providers with ground forces. Operational Stress Control and Readiness provides early identification and treatment of combat/operational stress problems, attempts to defeat the stigma of combat stress, and overcomes the barriers to care.

The Combat/Operational Stress Control deployment cycle resources for families include the Family Deployment Support Program. The program's components consist of Family

Readiness Days, family crisis support services, Return and Reunion Briefs for spouses, and building a sense of community among our military families.

**Marine For Life.** The Marine For Life Injured Support program assists seriously and very seriously injured Marines, Sailors who served with Marines, and their families. This program bridges the gap between military medical care and the Department of Veterans Affairs by providing individualized support through the transition period.

Individual case tracking and enduring support for our injured Marines and Sailors complements the Office of the Secretary of Defense's Military Severely Injured Center, which enables the program to provide around-the-clock injured support service. Marine For Life provides support tailored to an individual's needs, including pre- and post-service separation case tracking, assistance with the physical evaluation board process, and an interactive website that acts as a clearinghouse for all disability and benefit information. The program also provides employment assistance through a preexisting Marine For Life network that establishes local coordination with veterans, public, private, and charitable organizations that provide support to our injured warriors.

In April 2005, Marine For Life integrated Marine Corps and Department of Veterans Affairs' handling of Marine cases by assigning a Marine field grade officer to the Department of Veterans Affairs Headquarters' Seamless Transition Office. This integrates Marines into the Department of Veterans Affairs system and provides service oversight of Veterans Health Administration care and Veterans Benefits Administration benefits delivery. The Marine For Life program provides the direct point of contact for problem resolution for Marines within the Veterans Administration system.

**Military Construction—Bachelor Enlisted Quarters Initiative.** Bachelor housing is my top military construction priority for Program Objective Memorandum 2008. Barracks are a linchpin in the quality of life for our single Marines. With the help of Congress, we have tripled the funding for bachelor housing from Fiscal Year 2006 to 2007, and if the President's request is funded, we will double the 2007 funding in Fiscal Year 2008. We are funding barracks' furnishings on a seven-year replacement cycle and prioritizing barracks repair projects to preempt a backlog of repairs. Our \$1.7 billion barracks investment plan in support of a 175,000 Marine end strength provides adequate billeting for our unmarried junior enlisted and non-commissioned officer Marines by 2012.

**Public Private Venture Family Housing.** Our efforts to improve housing for Marines and their families continue. Thanks to continuing Congressional support, the Marine Corps will have contracts in place by the end of Fiscal Year 2007 to eliminate all inadequate family housing.

#### **VIII. Conclusion**

This Nation has high expectations of her Corps—as she should. Your Marines are answering the call around the globe, performing with distinction in the face of great hardships. As they continue to serve in harm’s way, our moral imperative is to fully support them—we owe them the full resources required to complete the tasks we have given them. Now more than ever they need the sustained support of the American people and the Congress to simultaneously maintain our readiness, reset the force during an extended war, modernize to face the challenges of the future, and fulfill our commitment to Marine families. On behalf of your Marines, I extend great appreciation for your support to date and thank you in advance for your ongoing efforts to support our brave countrymen and women in harm’s way. I promise you that the Corps understands the value of each dollar provided and will continue to provide maximum return for every dollar spent.