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COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

2014 REPORT TO CONGRESS

ON

THE POSTURE OF THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

March 12, 2014

## **I. America's Crisis Response Force**

The United States Marine Corps is the nation's crisis response force. Since our founding in 1775, Marines have answered the nation's call, faithfully protecting the American people and maintaining a world-class standard of military excellence. Today we are at a strategic inflection point. Fiscal uncertainty has threatened both our capacity and capabilities, forcing us to sacrifice our long-term health for near-term readiness. Despite these fiscal challenges, we remain committed to fielding the most ready Marine Corps the nation can afford. Around the globe Marines stand ready to engage America's adversaries or respond to any emerging crisis. Thanks to the support of Congress, the American people will always be able to count on the Marine Corps to fight and win our nation's battles.

America is a maritime nation: its security, resilience, and economic prosperity are fundamentally linked to the world's oceans. Our naval forces serve to deter and defeat adversaries, strengthen alliances, deny enemies sanctuary, and project global influence. The amphibious and expeditionary components of our naval force allow us to operate with assurance in the world's littoral areas. The Marine Corps and the Navy are prepared to arrive swiftly from the sea and project influence and power when needed. Operating from the sea, we impose significantly less political burden on our partners and allies, while providing options to our nation's leaders. We remain committed to the mission of assuring access for our nation's forces and its partners.

Forward deployed naval forces enable our nation to rapidly respond to crises throughout the world. The ability to engage with partnered nations, through highly trained and self-sustaining forces, maximizes America's effectiveness as a military power. For approximately eight percent of the Department of Defense's (DoD's) budget, the Marine Corps provides an affordable insurance policy for the American people and a highly efficient and effective hedge against global and regional tensions that cause instability. We provide our nation's leaders with time and decision space by responding to today's crisis, with today's forces...TODAY.

### **Naval Character**

We share a rich heritage and maintain a strong partnership with the United States Navy. Together we provide a fundamental pillar of our nation's power and security – the ability to operate freely across the seas. Security is the foundation of our nation's ability to maintain access to foreign markets and grow our economy through trade around the world. The Navy-Marine Corps relationship has never been better; we will continue to advance our shared vision as our nation transitions from protracted wars ashore and returns its focus to the maritime domain.

Throughout more than a decade of sustained operations ashore in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, we continued to deploy thousands of Marines aboard amphibious warships around the globe. The Navy and Marine Corps remains postured to provide persistent presence and engagement, maintaining a constant watch for conflict and regional unrest. Well-trained Marine units embarked aboard U.S. Navy warships increase the nation's ability to deter and defend against emerging threats. Our adaptability and flexibility provide unmatched capabilities to combatant commanders.

### **Unique Roles and Missions**

The Marine Corps provides unique, sea-based capabilities to the joint force. Our forward deployed amphibious based Marines have long played a critical role across the full range of military operations. We assure littoral access and enable the introduction of capabilities provided by other military services, government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, allies, and international partners. The stability and vitality of the global economic system is dependent on this capability, especially where our nation's vital interests are challenged.

The Marine Corps provides operating forces that are a balanced air-ground-logistics team. They are responsive, scalable and self-sustaining. As our nation's middle-weight force, we must maintain a high state of readiness, able to respond wherever and whenever the nation requires. Crisis response requires the ability to expand the expeditionary force after its introduction in theater. The Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) modular structure lends itself to rapidly right sizing the force as the situation demands, to include a joint or combined force.

## **II. Our Commitment to the Nation's Defense**

### **Global Crisis Response**

At our core, the Marine Corps is the Nation's crisis response force and fulfilling this role is our top priority. We have earned a reputation as the nation's most forward deployed, ready, and flexible force. Our performance over the past decade underscores the fact that responsiveness and versatility are always in demand. Marines formed the leading edge of the U.S. humanitarian response to earthquakes in Pakistan and Haiti, and disasters in the Philippines and Japan, all while fully committed to combat operations in Iraq or Afghanistan.

During 2013, four Marine Expeditionary Units (MEUs) and their partnered Amphibious Ready Groups (ARGs) participated in overseas operations and exercises. These forward deployed amphibious forces – normally built around a three-ship amphibious squadron with 2,200 embarked Marines – provided a uniquely trained and integrated task force, postured to

immediately respond to emerging crises. The Marine Corps has placed increased emphasis over the past several years partnering with coalition nations. Through security cooperation activities we advance mutual strategic goals by building capacity, deterring threats, and enhancing our crisis response capabilities. Throughout the year, ARG-MEUs strengthened our relationships through major exercises and operations with partnered nations which include Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Egypt, Qatar, Oman, India, Thailand, Australia, Japan and the Philippines.

**Super Typhoon Haiyan:** Typhoon Haiyan struck the Philippines on November 7, 2013 with winds gusting up to 195 mph, the fourth highest ever recorded. Even before the storm reached landfall, Marines and Sailors forward-based in Okinawa were preparing to respond. After returning to home port, elements of the 31st MEU embarked aboard USS *Germantown* and USS *Ashland* to support Typhoon Haiyan Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief operations in the Philippines. Within eight hours, Marine Forces forward based in the Pacific Theater provided the initial humanitarian response. This effort was followed by a Marine Corps led Joint Task Force, to include Marine MV-22 and KC-130J aircraft that flew 1,205 sorties (totaling more than 2,500 flight hours), delivered more than 2,005 tons of relief supplies and evacuated 18,767 Philipinos, 540 American citizens and 301 third country nationals. These efforts were closely coordinated on scene with the US Agency for International Development's office of Foreign Disaster Assistance. With the long-standing partnership and trust built between our two nations, Marines were able to rapidly respond with critically needed capabilities and supplies in times of crisis. This operation underscores the point, that trust is established and nurtured through forward presence...trust cannot be surged.

**Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force-Crisis Response (SP-MAGTF CR):** Forward positioned in Spain, SP-MAGTF-CR Marines are trained and equipped to support a wide range of operations. This unit is unique amongst other crisis response forces because it possesses an organic aviation capability that allows for SP-MAGTF CR to self-deploy. This force is primarily designed to support U.S. and partner security interests throughout the CENTCOM and AFRICOM theaters of operation, to include embassy reinforcement, non-combatant evacuation operations, and tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel. The MV-22's unprecedented agility and operational reach enable the SP-MAGTF-CR to influence these theaters of operation in a matter of hours. In 2013, SP-MAGTF-CR collaborated with local authorities to establish a presence that could rapidly respond to the full spectrum of contingencies within AFRICOM's AOR. SP-MAGTF-CR is also involved in bilateral and multilateral training exercises with regional partners in Europe and Africa.

Late last year, we witnessed the security situation deteriorate within **South Sudan**. Weeks of internal violence threatened to erupt into a civil war as populations were being driven from their homes. On short notice, 150 Marines from the SP-MAGTF-CR flew aboard MV-22

Ospreys over 3,400 miles non-stop to stage for future operations at Camp Lemonier, Djibouti on the Horn of Africa. The next day, Marines flew to Uganda to prepare for a potential non-combatant evacuation operation and to bolster our East Africa Response Force. In January, Marines aboard two KC-130J Hercules aircraft evacuated U.S. embassy personnel from harm's way.

## **Afghanistan**

Marines have been continuously at war in Afghanistan since 2001. In the past year, we have transitioned from counter-insurgency operations to training, advising, and assisting the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). With expanding capabilities and increased confidence, the ANSF is firmly in the lead for security in support of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan throughout all of Helmand and Nimroz Provinces.

Today, more than 4,000 active and reserve Marines are forward deployed in Regional Command South West (RC (SW)) and in full support of the Afghan National Police (ANP), and Afghan National Army (ANA). In 2013, we reduced our coalition force advisory teams from 43 to 15, and we shifted our emphasis from tactical operations to Brigade-level planning, supply chain management, infrastructure management, and healthcare development. In January 2013, there were over 60 ISAF (principally US, UK, and Georgian) bases in RC (SW). Today only seven remain. In addition, we removed permanent coalition presence in 7 of 12 districts with Marine forces located only in one remaining district center.

Afghan district community councils currently operate in seven Helmand districts which represent 80 percent of the population. As a result, health and education services have markedly improved. With the presidential election approaching in April 2014, we are expecting a higher turnout than the previous presidential elections due to the population's increased understanding of the electoral process. Currently, there are 214 planned polling stations in Helmand Province. The upcoming election will be conducted with limited International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) military assistance.

## **Asia-Pacific Rebalance**

As our nation continues to shift its strategic focus to the Asia-Pacific, it is important to note that the Marine Corps – specifically, III Marine Expeditionary Force (III MEF) – has been forward based there since the 1940s. Marines have a long history in the Pacific, replete with many hard-won victories. We are ideally suited to operate within this maritime region and we are adjusting our force lay-down to support the President's Strategic Guidance for the Department of Defense issued in January 2012. We remain on course to have 22,500 Marines

west of the International Date Line – forward based and operating within the Asia-Pacific theater.

We have the experience, capabilities, and most importantly, the strategic relationships already in place within the region to facilitate the national security strategy. Marines forward deployed and based in the Asia-Pacific Theater conduct more than 70 exercises a year, all designed to increase interoperability with our regional partners, build theater security cooperation, and enhance prosperity and stability in this region. By strategically locating our forces across the region, we enable more active participation in cooperative security and prosperity. No forces are more suited to the Pacific than naval amphibious forces. We envision an Asia-Pacific region where our Marines' presence will continue to build upon the excellent cooperation with our regional partners and allies to advance our common interests and common values.

### **Security Cooperation**

The Marine Corps supports all six Geographic Combatant Commands (GCC) with task-organized forces of Marines who conduct hundreds of Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) activities with the armed forces of more than 50 partner nations each year. Per the Defense Strategic Guidance, our forward-engaged Marines conducted TSC with a focus on building partner capacity, amphibious capability, interoperability for coalition operations, and assured access for U.S. forces. Overall, the Marine Corps participated in over 200 security cooperation engagements in 2013, including TSC exercises, bilateral exercises, and military-to-military engagements.

In September 2013, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Chief of Naval Operations, and Commandant of the Coast Guard signed the Maritime Security Cooperation Policy (MSCP). This tri-service policy prescribes a planning framework for Marine Corps, Navy, and Coast Guard headquarters, regional components, and force providers with the goal of achieving an integrated maritime approach to security cooperation in support of national security objectives.

**Black Sea Rotational Force (BSRF):** Forward postured in Romania, the BSRF engages partner nations and operates in multiple countries throughout the Black Sea-Eurasia region. Engagements included peacekeeping operations training events, technical skills familiarization events, and various professional symposia throughout the Caucasus region.

**SP-MAGTF-Africa 13 (SP-MAGTF-AF):** As a sub-component of SP-MAGTF-CR, SP-MAGTF-Africa 13 is forward based in Italy, consisting of a company-sized Marine element that engages with partnered countries in Africa. SP-MAGTF-AF 13 focused on training African troops primarily in Burundi and Uganda, bolstered militaries attempting to counter groups

affiliated with al-Qaeda operating across the Maghreb region, and provided security force assistance in support of directed Africa Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

**Marine Rotational Force – Darwin (MRF-D):** In 2013, a company sized element of MRF-D Marines deployed to support PACOM requirements and emphasize the U.S. commitment to the Asia-Pacific region. During their stay in Darwin, Marines conducted bilateral training with the Australian Defense Forces. In conjunction with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit – from August through September 2013 – MRF-D supported the bilateral Exercise KOOLENDONG at the Bradshaw Field Training Area in Australia to serve as a proof of concept in preparation for the expected arrival of 1150 Marines in 2014. This next deployment — the first step of Phase II, expands the rotational force from company to battalion sized rotational units. The intent in the coming years is to establish a rotational presence of a Marine Air-Ground Task Force of up to 2,500 Marines. The presence of Marines in Australia reflects the enduring alliance and common security interests in the region and improves interoperability between the United States and Australia

### **III. Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Priorities**

For FY15, the President’s Budget provides \$22.8 billion in our baseline budget, down from our FY14 budget of \$24.2 billion. This budget has been prioritized to support a highly ready and capable Marine Corps focused on crisis response. The capabilities we prioritized in this year’s budget submission protect near-term readiness while addressing some shortfalls in facility sustainment, military construction, equipment recapitalization and modernization. The Marine Corps budget priorities for 2015 include:

**Amphibious Combat Vehicle:** The development and procurement of the Amphibious Combat Vehicle (ACV) is my top acquisition priority. The modern battlefield requires both highly mobile and armor-protected infantry forces. The ACV will be designed to provide the capabilities required to meet current and future amphibious operations. This program is critical to our ability to conduct surface littoral maneuver and project Marine units from sea to land in any environment; permissive, uncertain, or hostile. The Marine Corps requires a modern, self-deployable, survivable, and affordable amphibious vehicle as a once-in-a-generation replacement for the existing Amphibious Assault Vehicles, which have been in service for more than 40 years.

**Marine Aviation:** The Marine Corps continues to progress towards a successful transition from 13 types of aircraft to six. This transformation of our aviation combat element will provide the Marine Corps and the future naval force with highly advanced fixed-wing, tilt-rotor, and rotary-wing platforms capable of operating across the full spectrum of combat operations. As the Marine Corps moves towards a future battlefield that is digitally advanced

and connected, the F-35B/C Joint Strike Fighter's (JSF) fifth-generation capabilities will enable the collection, fusion, and dissemination of information to all elements of the MAGTF. Additionally, MV-22 Osprey vertical flight capabilities coupled with the speed, range, and endurance of fixed-wing transports, are enabling effective execution of current missions that were previously unachievable on legacy platforms.

Modernization and sustainment initiatives are required to enhance the capabilities of Marine Aviation's legacy platforms to maintain warfighting relevance. Specifically, modernization and relevancy of F/A-18A-D Hornet and AV-8B Harrier aircraft are vital as the Marine Corps completes the transition to the F-35B Short Take-Off and Vertical Landing (STOVL) JSF in 2030. The F-35B is critical to our ability to conduct future combined arms operations in expeditionary environments.

**Resetting our Ground Equipment:** We have made significant strides in resetting our equipment after 12 years of wartime wear and tear. We are executing a reset strategy that emphasizes both our commitment to the American taxpayer and the critical linkage of balancing reset and readiness levels. Over 75 percent of the Marine Corps equipment and supplies in RC (SW) have been retrograded. The Marine Corps requires continued funding to complete the reset of equipment still being utilized overseas, to reconstitute home station equipment, and to modernize the force.

The current rate of equipment returning from theater will allow the Corps to reset our ground equipment by 2017, but this will require the continued availability of Overseas Contingency Operations funding for FY15 through FY17 to support our planned schedule of depot level maintenance. We are not asking for everything we want; only what we need. We have consciously chosen to delay elements of modernization to preserve current readiness. These short term solutions cannot be sustained indefinitely without cost to our future capabilities.

**Joint Light Tactical Vehicle (JLTV):** We remain firmly partnered with the U.S. Army in fielding a Joint Light Tactical Vehicle that lives up to its name, while also being affordable. The JLTV is needed to provide the Marine Corps with modern, expeditionary, light-combat and tactical mobility while increasing the protection of our light vehicle fleet. By replacing only a portion of our High Mobility Multipurpose-Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV) fleet, the JLTV will help to preserve our expeditionary capability with a modern level of protected mobility.

**Military Construction (MILCON):** For Fiscal Year (FY) 2015, the Marine Corps is requesting \$331 million for MILCON programs to support warfighting and critical infrastructure improvements. This FY15 budget represents a 61 percent funding level decrease from our FY14 request of \$842 million and a significant decrease from the Marine Corps' previous six year average. Our primary focus is toward the construction of Joint Strike Fighter (F-35B) and



Osprey (MV-22) facilities that support unit relocations to Hawaii and Japan. We have prioritized environmental and safety corrections such as water plant improvements and emergency communication capabilities. Funding is also included for the continued consolidation of the Marine Corps Security Force Regiment and its Fleet Antiterrorism Security Teams from the Norfolk area to Yorktown, Virginia. Finally, we are providing funding to continue the renovation, repairs and modernization of junior enlisted family housing units located in Iwakuni, Japan.

### **Readiness and Risk in the FY15 Budget**

The Marine Corps remains committed to building the most ready force our nation can afford, but this comes at a risk. As our nation continues to face fiscal uncertainty, the Marine Corps is responsibly building a relevant and lean force for the 21st century. The emerging security threats to our Nation demand that America has a globally responsive, truly expeditionary, consistently ready, maritime crisis response force.

While today's fiscal constraints may make us a leaner force, we are committed to maintaining our readiness – the real measure of our ability to meet unforeseen threats. Our innovative spirit, strong leadership, and enduring stewardship of the Nation's resources will guide our modernization efforts. We will invest in our Marines as they are the foundation of the Marine Corps. We will continue to reset our warfighting equipment and reconstitute our force after more than a decade of combat operations. We will maintain our investments in the research and development of new equipment and technologies that ensure our nation's crisis response force remains relevant and ready well into the 21st century.

In a fiscally constrained environment, it is critical that we maximize every taxpayer dollar entrusted to the Marine Corps. Our ability to efficiently manage our budget is directly related to our ability to properly account for every dollar. To that end, for the first time, the Marine Corps achieved an "unqualified" audit opinion from the DoD Inspector General. We became the first military service to receive a clean audit, which provides us with the ability to have a repeatable and defensible process to track, evaluate and certify each dollar we receive. We are particularly pleased that this audit will give the American people confidence in how the Marine Corps spends taxpayer money.

As fiscal realities shrink the Department of Defense's budget, the Marine Corps has forgone some important investments to maintain near-term readiness. To protect near-term readiness, we are taking risks in our infrastructure sustainment and reducing our modernization efforts. These trades cannot be sustained long term and portend future increased costs. As America's crisis response force, however, your Corps does not have a choice. We are required to maintain a posture that facilitates our ability to deploy today. As we continue to face the

possibility of further budget reductions under sequestration, we will be forced into adopting some variation of a less ready, tiered status, within the next few years.

As we enter into FY15 and beyond, we are making necessary trade-offs to protect near-term readiness, but this comes at a risk. Today, more than 60 percent of our non-deployed units are experiencing degraded readiness in their ability to execute core missions. Approximately 65 percent of non-deployed units have equipment shortfalls and 35 percent are experiencing personnel shortfalls necessitated by the effort to ensure that forward deployed units are 100 percent manned and equipped. The primary concern with out-of-balance readiness of our non-deployed operating forces is an increased risk in the timely response to unexpected crises or large-scale contingencies. The small size of the Marine Corps dictates that even non-deployed units must remain ready to respond at all times as they are often the nation's go-to forces when unforeseen crises occur.

The risk to the nation is too great to allow the readiness of the Marine Corps to be degraded. Through Congressional support we will continue to monitor our *Five Pillars of Readiness*: High Quality People, Unit Readiness, Capability and Capacity to Meet the Combatant Command Requirements, Infrastructure Sustainment, and Equipment Modernization. Our current funding levels protect current readiness; however, it does so at the expense of the infrastructure sustainment and equipment modernization efforts, which are keys to protecting future readiness. This is a rational choice given the current fiscal situation, but it is not sustainable over time. Ignoring any of these areas for long periods will hollow the force and create unacceptable risk for our national defense.

#### **IV. Shared Naval Investments**

Naval forces control the seas and use that control to project power ashore. The fiscal and security challenges we face demand a seamless and fully integrated Navy-Marine Corps team. Achieving our shared vision of the future naval force requires strong cooperation. Now more than ever, the Navy-Marine team must integrate our capabilities to effectively protect our nation's interests.

**Amphibious Warships:** The force structure to support the deployment and employment of two Marine Expeditionary Brigades (MEBs) simultaneously is 38 amphibious warfare ships. However, considering fiscal constraints, the Navy and Marine Corps have agreed to sustain a minimum of 33 amphibious warfare ships. The 33-ship force accepts risk in the arrival of combat support and combat service support elements of a Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB), as well as meeting the needs of the naval force within today's fiscal limitations.

The LX (R) program is the next major amphibious ship investment necessary to replace our aging fleet of LSDs. As we move forward with this program we should take advantage of the knowledge developed in building the LPD 17 class of ship. It is imperative that this is a warship capable of delivering Marines to an objective in a non-permissive environment. Replacing the LSD with a more capable platform with increased capacity for command and control, aviation operations and maintenance, vehicle storage, and potential for independent operations gives the Geographic Combatant Commander a powerful and versatile tool, and permit independent steaming operations.

**Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF):** The second method of deployment for the Marine Expeditionary Brigade is the MPF, which combines the speed of strategic airlift with the high embarkation capacity of strategic sealift. The two remaining Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadrons (MPSRONs), each designed to facilitate the deployment of one MEB, carry essential combat equipment and supplies to initiate and sustain MEB operations for up to 30 days. With the introduction of the seabasing enabling module, which includes Large Medium Speed Roll-On/Roll-Off (LMSR) vessels, Dry Cargo and Ammunition ships (T-AKE) and Mobile Landing Platforms (MLP), MPSRON-supported forces will have enhanced capability to operate from a seabase.

**Ship-to-Shore Connectors:** Ship-to-shore connectors move personnel, equipment and supplies, maneuvering from a seabase to the shoreline. These are critical enablers for any seabased force. Modern aerial connectors, such as the MV-22 Osprey extend the operational reach of the seabased force and have revolutionized our ability to operate from the sea. The Navy is in the process of modernizing the surface connector fleet by replacing the aging Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) and the 50-year-old fleet of Landing Craft Utility (LCU). Continued funding of the maintenance and extended service life programs of our existing fleet of connectors as well as investment in recapitalization of the surface connector capability through procurement of the Ship-to-Shore Connector (SSC) and Surface Connector will be critical for future security environments. We need to continue to push science and technology envelopes to develop the next generation of connectors.

## **V. Our Vision: Redesigning the Marine Corps**

As we drawdown the Marine Corps' active component end strength from war time levels of 202,000 Marines, we have taken deliberate steps to construct a force that we can afford to operate and sustain in the emerging fiscal environment. Over the past three years, we have undertaken a series of steps to build our current force plan. In 2010, our Force Structure Review Group utilized the Defense Strategic Guidance and operational plans to determine that the optimum size of the active component Marine Corps should be a force of 186,800. Under the

constraints of the 2011 Budget Control Act and the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance, we estimated that a force of 182,100 active component Marines could still be afforded with reduced modernization and infrastructure support. More recently, as we entered into the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), we came to the difficult conclusion that, under the threat of continued sequestration or some variant, an active duty force of 175,000 Marines (175K) is what our nation can afford, along with very steep cuts to USMC modernization accounts and infrastructure. This significantly reduced force is a “redesigned” Marine Corps capable of meeting steady state requirements. We will still be able to deter or defeat aggression in one region, however with significant strain on the force and increased risk to mission accomplishment.

The redesigned force is built to operate using the familiar Marine Air-Ground Task Force-construct, but it places greater emphasis on the ‘middleweight’ Marine Expeditionary Brigades by establishing standing MEB Headquarters. These MEB Headquarters will be prepared to serve as a ready crisis response general officer-level command element for the joint force. The redesigned force will deploy Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Forces (SPMAGTF) and Marine Expeditionary Units (MEU) to provide combatant commanders ready forces for a broad range of missions from forward presence to crisis response.

Maintaining a high state of readiness within the current and near-term fiscal climate will be challenging for Marines and their equipment. For example, the desired 186.8K force supported a 1:3 deployment-to-dwell ratio to meet emerging steady state demands. A redesigned force of 175K reduces that to a 1:2 dwell ratio for our operational units during a peacetime environment. This 1:2 ratio is the same operational tempo we have operated with during much of the past decade while engaged in combat and stability operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The redesigned force size implements the Strategic Choices Management Review (SCMR) directed 20 percent headquarters reduction, and it includes the elimination of one 3-star Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters. Our ground forces will be reduced by one Regimental Headquarters and eight battalions (six infantry, two artillery), as well as a reduction of an additional 27 companies or batteries. Our aviation forces will be reduced by three Group Headquarters and 13 squadrons. Our logistics forces will be reduced by 3,294 Marines (14 percent) and one battalion while conducting an extensive reorganization to gain efficiencies from reduced combat service support resources. In ground force terms, our aggregate cuts across the force comprise a reduction in nearly a Marine Division’s worth of combat power.

The redesigned force will retain the ability to generate seven rotational MEUs, with the capacity to deploy one from the East Coast, one from the West Coast, and one from Okinawa every 6 months. New Special Purpose MAGTF (SP-MAGTF) force structure responds to greater demand for multi-role crisis response forces in several Geographic Combatant Commands under the so-called “New Normal” security environment.

In support of the rebalance to the Pacific, we prioritized our Pacific theater forces and activities in the new force structure. Despite end strength reductions, III Marine Expeditionary Force – our primary force in the Pacific – remains virtually untouched. We also restored Pacific efforts that were gapped during Operation Enduring Freedom, including multiple exercises and large parts of the Unit Deployment Program. A rotational presence in Darwin, Australia also expands engagement opportunities and deterrence effects.

In support of CYBERCOM and in recognition of the importance of cyberspace as a warfighting domain, we are growing our cyberspace operations forces organized into a total of 13 teams by the end of 2016. The teams will provide capabilities to help defend the nation from cyber-attack, provide support to Combatant Commanders, and will bolster the defenses of DoD information networks and the Marine Corps Enterprise network.

Lastly, the Marine Corps remains fully committed to improving embassy security by adding approximately 1,000 **Marine Corps Embassy Security Guards** (MCESG) as requested by Congress. The redesigned force structure consists of the Marines necessary to maintain our steady-state deployments and crisis-response capabilities in the operating forces as well as the additional Marines for MCESG. We have absorbed new mission requirements while reducing our overall force size.

### **Expeditionary Force 21**

Expeditionary Force 21 (EF 21) is the Marine Corps' capstone concept that establishes our vision and goals for the next 10 years and provides a plan for guiding the design and development of the future force. One third of the Marine Corps operating forces will be forward postured. These forces will be task-organized into a greater variety of formations, capable of operating from a more diverse array of ships dispersed over wider areas, in order to meet the Combatant Commanders' security cooperation and partner engagement requirements. In the event of crises, we will be able to composite these distributed formations into larger, cohesive naval formations.

Expeditionary Force 21 will inform future decisions regarding how we will adjust our organizational structure to exploit the value of regionally focused forces. A fixed geographic orientation will facilitate Marine Commanders and their staffs with more frequent interactions with theater- and component-level organizations, establishing professional bonds and a shared sense of the area's challenges and opportunities.

Expeditionary Force 21 provides the basis for future Navy and Marine Corps capability development to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. The vision for Expeditionary Force 21 is to provide guidance for how the Marine Corps will be postured, organized, trained, and

equipped to fulfill the responsibilities and missions required around the world. Through Expeditionary Force 21 we intend to operate from the sea and provide the right sized force in the right place, at the right time.

## **VI. The Reawakening**

As we drawdown our force and focus the Marine Corps toward the future, we see an opportunity to re-set our warfighting institution and foster a *Reawakening* within our Corps. For the past 12 years of war, Marines have performed heroically on the battlefield. In Iraq and Afghanistan, Marines have carried on the Corps' legacy of warfighting prowess, and every Marine should be proud of that accomplishment. But as the preponderance of our Marine forces return from Afghanistan and we are focusing our efforts on the foundations of discipline, faithfulness, self-excellence and concerned leadership that have made us our Nation's premier, professional fighting force. This is the time to reset and prepare for future battles.

### **Focus on Values**

There is no higher honor, nor more sacred responsibility, than becoming a United States Marine. Our record of accomplishment over a decade of conflict will be in vain if we do not adhere to our core values. Our time honored tradition and culture bears witness to the legions of Marines who have gone before and who have kept our honor clean. Marine Corps leadership has long recognized that when resetting the force following sustained combat, Marines must embrace change. We are mindful of the many challenges that lie ahead; there is much work left to be done.

Our purposeful and broad-range efforts to reset the Corps have to be successful. We must retain our focused observance to the basic principles and values of our Corps. We refer to them as the soul of our Corps. As such, all Marines are rededicating themselves to *persistent discipline; faithful obedience to orders and instructions; concerned and engaged leadership; and strict adherence to standards*. These iron-clad imperatives have defined our Corps for 238 years. As we reset and *Reawaken* the Corps, our focus on the individual soul of the Corps is crucial.

The Marine Corps is fully committed to improve diversity and opportunity for the men and women who wear our uniform and we are actively seeking innovative solutions to improve our Corps. Over the last year, I have personally sought out successful women leaders in the corporate sector to help us better understand how they are achieving success in the areas of diversity, inclusion and integration of women in the workplace. This has paid immeasurable dividends, as we have gained a better appreciation for the dynamics on how to address and positively affect culture change within our ranks.

## **Marine Corps Force Integration**

The Marine Corps continues its deliberate, measured, and responsible approach to researching, setting conditions, and integrating female Marines in ground combat arms Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) and units. We welcome the chance to broaden career opportunities for all Marines that the Secretary of Defense's overturning of the Direct Ground Combat Assignment Rule offers us. Beginning in 2012, we assigned qualified female Marine officers and Staff Non-Commissioned Officers (SNCO) to 21 previously closed combat arms battalions in the assault amphibian, tank, artillery, low-altitude air defense and combat engineer fields. Since the elimination of the assignment policy restriction last year, we began conducting infantry-specific research by providing an opportunity for female officer volunteers to attend the Infantry Officer Course (IOC) following completion of initial officer training at The Basic School.

In 2013, we continued this infantry-specific research by providing an opportunity for enlisted female Marine volunteers to attend the Infantry Training Battalion (ITB) following graduation from recruit training. As a result of these assignment and early training assessments, the Marine Corps currently offers opportunities to female Marines in 39 of 42 occupational fields representing over 90 percent of our primary individual MOSs and in more than 141,000 positions world-wide. Know that your Marine Corps will continue to maintain high levels of combat readiness, while integrating female Marines into previously closed occupational fields and units to the maximum extent possible. We will continue to conduct the research and assessment of these integration efforts to ensure all Marines are provided an equitable opportunity for success in their chosen career path.

## **Sexual Assault Prevention and Response**

Sexual assault is criminal behavior that has no place in our Corps; we are aggressively taking steps to eradicate it. Over the past two years, we have tackled the sexual assault problem head on and have seen measurable improvements in three specific areas – prevention, reporting, and offender accountability.

The Marine Corps continues to implement its Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Campaign Plan. Launched in June 2012, the SAPR Campaign Plan called for large-scale institutional reforms, to include the implementation of SAPR training programs on an unprecedented scale and frequency. This includes the continued refinement of prevention training Corps-wide, while strengthening capabilities for victim care, offender accountability, and program assessment. Our reforms have yielded many positive results that affect Marines on an individual level, while steadily transforming the Corps into a leading institution in both

preventing and responding to this crime. The most promising result of the Campaign Plan thus far has been the continued rise in reporting.

In FY13, reports of sexual assault in the Marine Corps increased by 86 percent continuing a trend started in FY12, which saw a 31 percent reporting increase. In addition, 20 percent of all FY13 reports were made for incidents that occurred prior to the victim joining the Corps; 17 percent were made for incidents that took place over one year ago. With sexual assault being a historically under-reported crime, we believe that these trends speak directly to the trust and confidence that Marines have in their immediate commanders and the overall Marine Corps' program. These encouraging developments suggest that our efforts are working to increase awareness of SAPR resources and to establish a healthy environment of respect and dignity where victims feel confident in coming forward.

With this increased sexual assault reporting, I anticipated an increased demand within the military justice system. Consistent with this prediction, between FY12 and FY13, the number of child and adult sex offense prosecutions increased from 59 to 119. The number of those cases that were contested increased by over 160 percent. These numbers reinforce the need to continue building and manning a first-rate legal practice in the Marine Corps, comprised of quality judge advocates and legal service specialists, that anticipates and adapts to evolving legal challenges.

In 2012, I restructured the model for the delivery of legal services in the Marine Corps in order to elevate the practice of law and better handle complex cases, such as sexual assaults. This new model does two key things: (1) it centralizes supervision of the military law practice; and (2) it puts more competent and experienced attorneys in charge of the military justice system. Without question, the restructuring of our legal community dramatically improved our performance in prosecuting, defending, and judging sexual assault and other complex trials. I am committed to reinforcing the success gained by this reorganization.

We are continuing to evaluate and assess the new demands placed on our military justice system and our legal community. These include the creation and expansion of the Victims' Legal Counsel Organization (VLCO) and the extension of the requirement to provide military justice experts to the Office of Military Commissions (OMC). To meet these increasing demands and new legislative initiatives affecting our justice system, I have directed an internal review of our retention and assignment policies to ensure we can continue to operate a first class military justice system. This review will have two goals. In the short term, we must ensure we have a sufficient number of qualified judge advocates to confront the immediate requirements. In the long term, we must ensure that judge advocates serve in assignments that will maximize their military justice expertise, while maintaining their credibility and skills as unrestricted Marine Officers, to include operational law and traditional Marine Corps leadership assignments.



## **Recruiting and Retaining High Quality People**

We make Marines, win battles, and return quality citizens back to their homes across America, citizens who, once transformed, will be Marines for life. Your Corps must be comprised of the best and brightest of America's youth. To operate and succeed in volatile and complex environments, Marines must be physically fit, morally strong, and possess the intelligence required to make good decisions and operate advanced weapon systems. It is a complex and ever-evolving profession.

The Marine Corps utilizes a variety of officer and enlisted recruiting processes that stress high mental, moral, and physical standards. Additionally, all processes are continuously evaluated and improved to ensure that recruits meet or exceed the highest standards possible. Retaining the best and most qualified Marines is accomplished through a competitive career designation process for officers, and a thorough evaluation process for enlisted Marines, both of which are designed to measure, analyze, and compare our Marines' performance, leadership and accomplishments.

## **Civilian Marines**

Our civilian Marines serve alongside our Marines all around the world. Our civilian Marine workforce remains the leanest of all services with a ratio of one civilian to every ten active duty Marines (1:10). More than 95 percent of our civilians are located outside the Pentagon at our bases, stations, depots and installations. Civilian Marines provide stability in our training and programs when our Marines rotate between units, demonstrating that our "best value" for the defense dollar applies to the total force.

The Marine Corps supports measures that enhance consistency, efficiency and cost effectiveness of our workforce. Since 2009, we have restrained growth by prioritizing civilian workforce requirements. Additionally, we have realigned resources to retain an affordable and efficient workforce. In reaction to Defense Departmental reductions, we stood up an Executive Steering Group to determine how to minimize stress to our workforce. As we move forward we will continue to keep faith with our all-volunteer force of federal civilians.

## **VII. Summary**

Marines are key components to the range of military missions our national security demands. We are proud of our reputation for frugality and remain one of the best values for the defense dollar. In these times of budget austerity, the nation continues to hold high expectations of its Marine Corps, and our stewardship of taxpayer dollars. The Marine Corps will continue to

meet the needs of the Combatant Commanders as a strategically mobile force optimized for forward-presence, and crisis response.

As we continue to work with Congress, the Department of the Navy, and the Department of Defense, your Marine Corps remains focused on today's fight and the Marines in harm's way. The United States Marine Corps will remain the nation's premier crisis response force. We will remain most ready, when the nation is least ready... always faithful to our Marines, Sailors and families.