

MARINE CORPS COMMUNICATION PLAYBOOK



TOP ISSUES

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- F-35B Lightning II - Joint Strike Fighter
- Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR)
- Marine Corps Force Integration Plan

WHAT'S NEW

- 5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade
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- The Great Green Fleet
- Voting Assistance Program

POINT OF CONTACT:

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**Please check with the PA POC on the briefing card or your command PAO prior to using these talking points to ensure you have the latest guidance.*

5TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY BRIGADE

BACKGROUND

At the 2015 USMC Executive Offsite (EOS) the Commandant of the Marine Corps directed the re-designation of Command Element, Marine Forces Central Command Forward (CE MARFORCENTCOM FWD) to Command Element, 5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (CE, 5th MEB) in support of Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Central Command (COMUSMARCENT) operations in the Central Command (CENTCOM) area of responsibility. Name change required the deactivation of CE MARFOR CENTCOM FWD and activation of CE, 5th MEB, since both commands have distinct honors, lineages, and functions.

THEMES AND MESSAGES

MISSION: CE, 5th MEB will provide command and control to various ground, air and logistics elements to conduct operations and exercises that demonstrate our commitment to security and stability, and deterrence of destabilizing activities.

THEATER SECURITY COOPERATION / EXERCISES: CE, 5th MEB will endeavor to increase partner nations' military proficiency, expand cooperation, support development of combined-arms capabilities and doctrine, and promote interoperability between the Marine Corps and regional forces.

ENGAGEMENT: CE, 5th MEB will provide a scalable, standing, joint capable, forward-deployed headquarters in the CENTCOM AOR that is able to conduct forward deployed expeditionary operations in order to support COMUSMARCENT operational requirements.

CRISIS RESPONSE: CE 5th MEB, working with other U.S. forces in the region, will be prepared to protect and evacuate U.S. citizens and non-combatants or provide humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR) if directed.

Q&As:

Q1: What is CE, 5th MEB?

A1: Similar to CE MARFOR CENTCOM FWD, the CE, 5th MEB serves as a scalable, standing, joint capable, forward-deployed headquarters in the CENTCOM AOR capable of conducting expeditionary operations, crisis response and limited contingency operations. Typically, Marine Expeditionary Brigades are comprised of a ground combat element, an aviation combat element, a logistics combat element and a command element. CE, 5th MEB will serve as 5th MEB's command element, forward deployed. The other combat elements of the MEB's Marine Air/Ground task Force (MAGTF) will reside in the United States until called upon to execute large scale contingencies.

Q2: Is 5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade being deployed in response to recent offensives by ISIL and religious extremists in the region?

A2: 5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade is not being activated in response to a specific incident. This is a name change only. The U.S. Marine Corps will deactivate CE MARCENT FWD CENTCOM and activate CE, 5th MEB to more accurately reflect Marine Corps organizational doctrine. CE, 5th MEB will continue to provide a scalable, standing, joint capable, forward-deployed headquarters in the USCENCOM area of responsibility.

Q3: How long will CE, 5th MEB be located in the region?

A3: CE, 5th MEB's presence in the region is at the request of the U.S. Central Command commander and with the approval of designated host-nation.

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AMPHIBIOUS COMBAT VEHICLE

SITUATION

Some internal and external audiences are not informed about Marine Corps infantry mobility requirements and existing capability gaps and how a complementary system of capabilities, which includes the Amphibious Combat Vehicle (ACV), provides the most robust and flexible capability solution for the evolution of amphibious operations.

STATEMENT/VIDEO

The Marine Corps will, in the near term, field an ACV in order to provide protected mobility for our infantry units throughout the varied terrain in the littorals. The ACV will be amphibious. However, it will normally rely on surface connectors to conduct the preponderance of its ship-to-shore movement.

Risk over the midterm will be mitigated through survivability and sustainment upgrades to our current self-deploying Amphibious Assault Vehicles (AAV) to extend their service life through 2035.

In a longer term effort, in concert with the Navy, the Marine Corps will continue to explore capabilities that better enable high-speed, extended range surface littoral maneuver from ship-to-objective in order to fully replace its legacy AAVs that were first fielded in 1972.

An ACV video has been produced to provide the background and strategy behind the ACV acquisition decision:

<http://www.mccdc.marines.mil/Resources/AmphibiousCombatVehicle/ACVVideo.aspx>

TALKING POINTS

TP1. The evolution of operational maneuver from the sea (OMFTS) and ship to objective maneuver (STOM) requires developing a complimentary portfolio of capabilities within the [Ground Combat and Tactical Vehicle Strategy](#) (GCTVS) and Connector Strategy. The ACV is specifically designed to fill current protected mobility capability gaps within the portfolio of capabilities.

TP2. As a bridge to the ACV, which could be introduced into the operating forces as early as the 4th quarter of FY 20, the decision has been made to sustain and upgrade about a third of the AAV fleet.

TP3. Modern wheeled vehicles have substantially closed the maneuver performance gap that previously existed between tracked and wheeled vehicles with improved cross-country performance and shore-to-shore swimming capability.

Q&As

Q1. Is the decision to acquire the ACV moving away from the Marine Corps service-defining capability of transitioning from ship to shore and conducting forcible entry?

A1. No. However, the need to modernize the service-defining capability of transitioning from ship to shore and conducting forcible entry and surface assault is unquestioned. Initial indications are that ACV prototypes developed by industry have a swimming capability equal to an AAV. However, this will need to be tested by the Marine Corps. High water speed (HWS) remains an important capability. The Marine Corps is working closely with the Office of Naval Research to pursue technology that may enable this capability without unacceptable trade-offs. ACV 2.0 serves as a conceptual placeholder for a future decision around 2025. At that time, with the knowledge gained from the fielding and deployment of ACV 1.1 and 1.2, the state of the naval connector strategy and research and development work in support of a HWS capable, self-deploying armored personnel carrier will aid in an informed decision.

AMPHIBIOUS COMBAT VEHICLE (CONT'D)

Q2. What will happen to the AAV?

A2. The AAV and ACV are complementary capabilities. We have begun a survivability upgrade program to 392 AAVs, a sufficient number to support our MEUs and to provide a bridge to a longer range solution. These upgrades will provide for performance, reliability, and survivability improvements, and will be delivered to the Fleet beginning in FY 19.

Q3. Why have you chosen to go with a wheeled vehicle when you previously said a tracked vehicle was desired?

A3. A combination of tactical, technical and budgetary factors led us to this decision. With that said, wheeled vehicle performance has improved greatly since we began our efforts to replace the AAV. Wheeled vehicles have:

- Greater mobility in complex, littoral terrain
- Increased IED protection (2X)
- Reduced fuel consumption (>1/2 fuel consumption)
- Reduced maintenance (improved mean time between failure)
- Reduced signature and smaller profiles (a critical survivability factor in a G-RAMM environment)
- Increased dispersion of personnel among more vehicles (a critical risk reduction factor)
- Design margins that allow for a family of vehicles of various configurations (personnel, command, and recovery variants; potentially others i.e.: indirect-fire, anti-armor in the future)
- Significantly reduced cost
- Less technological risk
- Nearer-term availability.

Additionally, we have determined that emerging anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) systems will require us, in some instances, to stand-off at distances beyond which even a high water speed ACV can reasonably achieve.

Q4. What impact will a wheeled ACV have on amphibious shipping and surface connectors?

A4. The concept of employment for ACV places a premium on using enablers like the mobile landing platform (MLP) and surface connectors. Programmed efforts, like the ship-to-shore connectors (SSC) that succeed existing landing craft, air-cushioned (LCAC), are critical to our approach. Over the longer term, we will continue to exploit opportunities to innovate via other surface platforms and pursue non-traditional landing craft solutions such as the Joint High Speed Vessel. In much the same way the MV-22 has greatly expanded the amphibious forces littoral maneuver options, we must also innovate our surface connector fleet.

POINT OF CONTACT

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AMPHIBIOUS INTEROPERABILITY

BACKGROUND: [Not for release] A series of media reports recently highlighted the Marine Corps' exploratory efforts to create more maritime flexibility to offset a lack of amphibious shipping in the European theater. Specifically, the articles highlight the Marine Corps' work with allied nations to examine the possibility of embarking and deploying Marine Forces and equipment aboard allied ships. This type of interoperability training is not new to the Marine Corps – we have done interoperability training for decades to enable more seamless combined operations should a crisis occur. As this issue crosses both service and operational chains, the guidance in this document represents the official Marine Corps communication points regarding the Allied Maritime Basing Initiative, which may differ slightly from the perspective of a combatant commander.

TALKING POINTS

TP1. Allied ships will not supplant the freedom of action and flexibility offered by U.S. amphibious ships. Marine Forces Europe/Africa's ongoing training with NATO amphibious ships represents continued experimentation, security cooperation, and relationship building to make us better prepared for world events. The Navy and Marine Corps will continue to support this prudent planning to improve shared maritime capabilities and add options for the geographic combatant commanders. This type of innovation is aligned with the tenets of the recently signed U.S. maritime strategy, Cooperative Strategy 21.

TP2. Adapted from Cooperative Strategy 21: The amphibious capabilities provided by the Navy-Marine Corps team, especially those that are forward postured, have long played a key role in enabling overseas access for missions across the range of military operations. Because all nations share in the collective benefits of maritime security, it is a promising area for expanded cooperation with our allies and partners. Through multinational exercises and training, the ability to operate with partner nations improves, ensuring more seamless multi-national operations should a crisis arise. This function supports the Navy and Marine Corps' missions of defending the homeland, protecting maritime commons, and strengthening partnerships.

TP3. Based on our Force Structure Assessment, the current demand signal from combatant commanders would require 54 amphibious ships. To provide the appropriate amount of lift to support operational plans, the Marine Corps requires 38 amphibious ships. Currently, there are 30 amphibious ships in the fleet. With the current fiscal restraints the Navy and Marine Corps accept risk with a plan for 33 amphibious ships with a potential projection of 34.

TP4. For decades, the Marine Corps has conducted amphibious interoperability training with allies and partners to develop their organic capability and our ability to operate with them should a crisis occur. We currently conduct amphibious training with Japan, Australia, Republic of Korea, Thailand, the Philippines, the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, Italy, and Spain. While developing the capability to operate more seamlessly with our allies remains a priority, the Marine Corps is primarily seeking to maximize a variety of amphibious capabilities and options. To clarify: the Marine Corps must retain the capability to respond immediately to threats to our Nation's security. For the Marine Corps, this translates to investigating Allied Maritime Basing Initiatives while retaining the maritime flexibility offered by U.S. amphibious ships.

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AVIATION SAFETY

BACKGROUND

In FY-15, the Marine Corps suffered seven Class A flight mishaps:

- Sept. 1, 2014, a CH-53E from VMM-263, 22nd MEU, crashed in the Gulf of Aden near Djibouti, Africa. All 25 personnel were rescued. The aircraft was lost at sea.
- Oct. 1, 2014, an MV-22B Osprey from VMM-163, 11th MEU, descended into the North Arabian Gulf immediately after takeoff from the USS Makin Island. As a result of the mishap, one Marine was lost at sea.
- Jan. 24, 2015, mishap involving a UH-1Y from HMLA-169 at Twentynine Palms, CA, killing both pilots.
- Feb. 22, 2015, mishap involving a 2nd MAW F/A-18 Hornet, near Statenville, GA. The two aircrew ejected safely. The aircraft was destroyed.
- May 11, 2015, mishap involving a UH-1Y while conducting humanitarian assistance in Nepal, killing eight personnel and destroying the aircraft.
- May 17, 2015, an MV-22 in Marine Corps Training Area Bellows, Hawaii made a hard landing while conducting a long-range vertical strike, killing two and injuring several.
- June 19, 2015 an AV-8B from VMM-161 conducted a roll-on landing aboard USS Essex in the Indian Ocean, causing significant damage to the aircraft and ship. The mishap classification has not been declared yet due to the aircraft still being inspected to determine the final cost and damage.
- Sept. 2, 2015, a CH-53E from HMH-464, 2d MAW, experienced a hard-landing in Camp Lejeune, NC, resulting in one death and several injuries.

Additionally, seven MARSOC Marines died when a U.S. Army UH-60 Blackhawk crashed in a storm near Eglin, Florida in March 2015.

TALKING POINTS

TP1. The Marine Corps remains committed to ensuring the safety of our aircrews and the air worthiness of both our legacy and emerging aircraft. Our governing safety directives encourage the identification of hazards and the correction of discrepancies to ensure operational readiness. By its very nature, there will always be inherent risk in military aviation. That being said, the Marine Corps utilizes highly reliable aircraft, extensively trains pilots, maintainers and aircrew, conducts exhaustive maintenance, and at every step puts in place safeguards and precautions to ensure a high degree of aviation safety. Our most valued asset is the individual Marine.

TP2. Historical data shows that Marine Corps aviation, both in terms of platforms and piloting, is safe.

- In FY-15 the Marine Corps experienced seven Class A flight mishaps over approximately 179,000 flight hours. (flight mishaps, flight-related mishaps and aviation ground mishaps)
- Broken down by fiscal year, annual Marine Corps Class A aviation mishap rates, per 100,000 flight hours, remain low:
 - FY-11: 4.05
 - FY-12: 2.51
 - FY-13: 3.60
 - FY-14: 2.28
 - FY-15: 3.49
 -

Without exception, Marine Corps platforms perform safely and reliably in extreme conditions and while conducting hazardous missions: since FY10, per 100,000 flight hours the Class A flight *mishap rates for Marine aircraft are:

AVIATION SAFETY (CONT'D)

- KC-130: 0.00
- F/A-18 (A-D): 1.81
- AH-1 (W and Z): 2.13
- CH-53E: 2.42
- EA-6B: 2.4
- CH-46: 3.09
- MV-22: 2.90
- AV-8B: 3.49
- UH-1 (N and Y): 3.49

***Note: rates for FLIGHT mishaps only (intent for flight, and damage to the aircraft), do not account for flight-RELATED mishaps (MV-22 crew chief falling out of aircraft, for example), or aviation ground mishaps (damage/injury while on ground without intent for flight). This data is current as of September 2015.**

TP5. The Marine Corps rigorously investigates all aviation mishaps to identify the causes, learn from them, and rectify the problems that occurred: as applicable, this includes aircraft software and hardware modifications, updated training, and revisions to publications and regulations.

MV-22-Specific Talking Points – See MV-22 Playbook Card

UH-1Y-Specific Talking Points

TP6. UH-1s and AH-1s are the workhorses of the Marine Corps, supporting operations around the world with more than 196,000 combat flight hours since 2004. This is all the more remarkable since the fleet is undergoing a complete conversion to the Yankee and Zulu variants, done “in-stride” without any gapping of persistent operational requirements and commitments.

TP7. One of the Marine Corps’ most-utilized aviation assets, the UH-1 operates in a wide range of conditions, from the deserts of Iraq and Afghanistan to the mountains of Nepal, as well as from amphibious shipping.

CH-53-Specific Talking Points

TP8. We remain committed to ensuring the safety of our aircrews and the air worthiness of the CH-53E fleet. Together with the NAVAIR engineers and Fleet Support Team wire and fuel experts, our aircraft maintainers and aircrew will complete the requirements of the updated air bulletin and additional inspections.

TP9. Until it is replaced, the CH-53E will continue to support the full spectrum of assigned Marine Corps combat operations and scheduled deployments. The Marine Corps will ensure a responsible transition from CH-53E to the CH-53K.

Q&As

Q1: What are the types and classes of aviation mishaps?

A1: There are several types of aviation mishaps: flight mishaps, where there is an intent for flight, defined as power being at takeoff rating, with brakes released; flight-related mishaps, where there is damage to government property external to the airframe (i.e. something falls off an aircraft); and aviation ground mishaps, where there is no intent for flight but damage to an aircraft. Moreover, aviation mishaps are further categorized by class: Class A mishaps result in death or permanent disability to a service member, and/or more than \$2 million in damage to the aircraft; Class B mishaps result in between \$2 million and \$500,000 in damages or partial permanent disability to a service member; and Class C mishaps result in between \$500,000 and \$50,000 in damages or more than three lost work days due to injury.

AVIATION SAFETY (CONT'D)

Q2: How many fatalities has the MV-22 caused over the past five years? What about the UH-1? The CH-53E?

A2: Since FY10 there have been four fatalities resulting from MV-22 flight mishaps: two in Morocco in 2012, one lost at sea in the Persian Gulf in 2014, and one in the hard landing on May 18; as well as two in flight-related mishaps: one fell from an MV-22 in North Carolina in 2014 and one in Afghanistan in 2011. Since FY10, there have been 20 fatalities resulting from UH-1 flight mishaps: two in Afghanistan in October 2009, one in California in 2011, five in 2012 and two in 2015, as well as two Australians in Afghanistan in 2012 and eight (six Marines and two Nepalese) in the 11 May incident. No fatalities have resulted from any CH-53E mishaps in the past five years.

Q3: Is the Marine Corps' mishap rate rising, falling or remaining the same?

A3: The Marine Corps' Class A mishap rate remains roughly at average.

Q4: How does the Marine Corps' aviation safety record compare to others?

A4: While it is not possible to compare Marine Corps mishap rates to civilian aviation or other services' aviation mishap rates due to the wide range of missions Marine aviation carries out and variety of aircraft types, the Marine Corps has a solid, safe record based on rigorous pilot and aircrew training and thorough aircraft maintenance.

Q5: What is the investigation process for aviation mishaps?

A5: For Class A mishaps, an investigation board is composed, consisting of an O5-or-above graduate of the Naval Safety Center's Aviation Safety Course, from outside the mishap unit, as the senior member, an investigator from the Naval Safety Center, operations and maintenance representatives from the mishap unit, a flight surgeon and other subject matter experts as required. The board has 30 days to submit its report, although extensions can be granted, and spends the time reviewing available information, conducting interviews, site surveys and engineering investigations as necessary, and compiling the report, to include recommendations for future use. The report is submitted for endorsement through the chain of command, recommendations are decided upon, and the investigation is ultimately closed out by the Naval Safety Center.

Q6: How does the process work when a pilot finds and reports a discrepancy?

A6: If a pilot finds a discrepancy prior to a flight, the pilot will initiate a maintenance action form. This is electronically entered into a maintenance discrepancy reporting system. If the discrepancy puts the aircraft in an unsafe-for-flight status, the aircraft then is out of flight status until the discrepancy is corrected.

Q7: Why did the Marine Corps call an operational pause to its entire CH-53 Fleet in February 2015, and how long did it remain in place?

A7: Lt. Gen. Jon Davis, Deputy Commandant for Marine Corps Aviation, ordered a temporary operational pause for all Marine Corps CH-53E aircraft on Feb. 5, 2015. The purpose of the operational pause was to provide leadership with time to make prudent, fact-based decisions by ensuring that they fully understood the problem and risks associated with the previous implementation of Airframes Bulletin-343. Flight operations resumed on Feb. 6, 2015. Not in relation to this specific incident, but due to the readiness challenges of the CH-53E, a readiness review was completed and corrective actions are ongoing as a result of the study.

Q8: What happened with the CH-53E that crashed in the Gulf of Aden in September 2014?

A8: On Sept 1, 2015, a Marine Corps CH-53E (BUNO 162485) from VMM-263, 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit, experienced an in-flight mishap in the Gulf of Aden, approximately 46 miles northeast of Djibouti, Africa. The mishap occurred at 4:56 p.m. local time (1356Z) as the aircraft was approaching the USS Mesa Verde (LPD-19), a U.S. Navy amphibious vessel.

AVIATION SAFETY (CONT'D)

There were 25 Marine Corps and Navy personnel aboard the aircraft when the mishap occurred; two pilots, two crew members, and 21 passengers. All personnel exited the aircraft, and were rescued within minutes. There were no serious injuries. The aircraft was lost at sea.

For more information, contact the II MEF Public Affairs Office at 910-451-5260.

Q9: What can you tell me about the UH-1N crash in Nepal in May?

A9: Six Marines and two Nepalese soldiers were onboard a UH-1Y Huey with Marine Squadron 469 deployed in support of Joint Task Force 505 when it went down near Charikot, Nepal, on the afternoon of May 12, 2015. The crew was operating in support of a joint humanitarian disaster relief operation to limit further loss of life and human suffering in response to the devastating earthquakes that struck central Nepal April 25 and May 12, 2015.

For more information, please contact LtCol Stuart Fugler, III MEF Public Affairs Officer, at Stuart.Fugler@usmc.mil, or 315-622-7746.

Q10: What can you tell me about the Harrier mishap which occurred on the 15th MEU on June 19, 2015? Were there any injuries?

A10: An AV-8B Harrier assigned to the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit's aviation combat element made a hard landing on the deck of USS Essex at approximately 4:30 a.m. Eastern Standard Time June 19, 2015, while conducting routine flight operations. No personnel were injured in the mishap. The ship's flight deck remains fully functional. The mishap classification has not been declared yet due to the aircraft still being inspected to determine the final cost and damage.

For further details about this incident, please contact the 15th MEU public affairs officer, Capt. Block, at brian.block@essex.usmc.mil.

Q11: What can you tell me about the UAS that crashed near Cherry Point on June 24?

A11: A 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing RQ-7B Shadow Unmanned Aerial Vehicle crashed June 24 in the Neuse River near Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point. There were no reports of injuries or property damage.

The cause of the mishap is under investigation. For more information, please contact the Cherry Point Public Affairs Office at (252) 626-9532.

Q12: What can you tell me about the incident that happened with the MV-22 mishap on May 17, 2015, at Marine Corps Training Area Bellows in Hawaii?

A12: An MV-22 Osprey from the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit experienced a hard landing while conducting training aboard Marine Corps Training Area Bellows, Hawaii, at approximately 11:00 a.m., Hawaii time. Two Marines lost their lives in that tragic accident.

For more information about this mishap, to include the investigation, please contact the Marine Forces Pacific Public Affairs Office: chuck.little@usmc.mil; (808) 477-8309.

Q13: How many Marines have been killed in aviation mishaps this year?

A13: We have unfortunately lost a total of 18 Marines this calendar year in aviation-related mishaps. Eleven of those Marines were killed in Marine Corps aviation mishaps.

AVIATION SAFETY (CONT'D)

Q14: How does the number of Marines killed this year relate to previous years?

A14: The number of Marines who have lost their lives in aviation-related mishaps by year over the past five calendar years:

- CY-11: 6
- CY-12: 15
- CY-13: 0
- CY-14: 3
- CY-15: 18

The devastating loss of life in our Marine Corps family is much higher this year due to 13 of the deaths being a result of two accidents. The overall number of Marine Corps aviation-related mishaps remains average and will be explained in more detail below.

Points of Contact

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BLACK SEA ROTATIONAL FORCE 15

BACKGROUND

Black Sea Rotational Force began in 2010 to form a Security Cooperation Marine Air-Ground Task Force. The forward postured troops' ability to conduct military-to-military engagements with partner nations in Eastern Europe while providing a crisis response capability made it an essential year-round mission to U.S. European Command (EUCOM).

THEMES AND MESSAGES

INTEROPERABILITY: A rotational U.S. military presence in the region significantly increases the level of cooperation between our allied and partner nations' militaries through bi-lateral and multinational engagements and exercises.

MAINTAIN ENDURING PARTNERSHIPS: Partnerships formed from multinational exercises and military-to-military training engagements are crucial in dealing with regional issues and keeping peace in the Eastern European region.

CRISIS RESPONSE: BSRF is able to respond to a broad range of military operations in the EUCOM area of responsibility, including but not limited to: crisis and contingency response, U.S. Embassy reinforcement, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations.

COLLECTIVE SECURITY: Our persistent presence measures in Eastern Europe are defensive in nature, fully in line with our international commitments and agreements, and necessary to reassure our allies of our commitment to collective defense.

COMBINED ARMS COMPANY

BACKGROUND

In August 2015, an armor supplement to the Black Sea Rotational Force arrived in Eastern Europe to reassure NATO allies and partner nations of the U.S. commitment to protecting territorial integrity in the region. The Combined Arms Company provides a rotational unit of Marines, armored vehicles, and indirect-fire capabilities in Novo Selo Training Area, Bulgaria, boosting the scope of exercises and engagements we conduct with NATO Allies and partners in terms of capabilities, equipment, and access. Accompanied by more than 160 Marines, M1A1 Abrams tanks, three 155 millimeter artillery, and light-armored reconnaissance vehicles comprise the unit.

THEMES AND MESSAGES

REASSURANCE: Our continued military exercises in Eastern Europe are necessary to reassure our Allies of our commitment to protecting territorial integrity.

DETERRENCE: We do not know what threats we face tomorrow but if we strengthen our NATO team, we strengthen our deterrence to adversaries.

FORWARD PRESENCE: We face security crises together; the CAC improves our forward presence with mechanized units, indirect-fire capabilities, and mobility.

Q&As

Q1. Why is the U.S. Marine Corps in the Black Sea Region?

A1. The U.S. Marine Corps is in the Black Sea region to participate in Black Sea Rotational Force, a bi-annual rotation of Marines conducting security cooperation activities with partner nations in the Black Sea, Balkan and Caucasus regions. The military-to-military engagements aim to enhance our collective professional military capacity and increase our interoperability. In addition, we are maintaining and strengthening our relationships with our allied and partner nations so we may collectively address common security challenges in the region.

BLACK SEA ROTATIONAL FORCE 15 (CONT'D)

Q2. What kind of unit are you bringing to the region?

A2. The Black Sea Rotational Force is comprised of approximately 500 Marines and sailors from 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division from Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., along with other augments from II Marine Expeditionary Force. The Combined Arms Company brings an additional approximate 160 Marines to the region.

Q3. What can you tell us about the purpose and objectives for BSRF-15?

A3. The purpose of Black Sea Rotational Force 15 is to conduct targeted security cooperation activities with partner-nations in the Black Sea, Balkan and Caucasus regions in order to enhance our professional military capacity and increase interoperability. We are bolstering our relationships with partner nations so we can collectively address common security challenges in the region.

Q4. When does the rotation start and how long will it last?

A4. Marines assigned to BSRF-15.2 began arriving in Eastern Europe in July 2015 and are expected to return to Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune in February 2016.

Q5. How is the CAC different from other rotational forces?

A5. The Combined Arms Company is a Marine rotational unit of approximately 150 Marines with an increased capability for exercises by providing armored vehicles and indirect-fire assets, including four M1A1 Abrams tanks, three 155 millimeter artillery cannons, and six light-armored reconnaissance vehicles.

Q6. Will the CAC be permanently based in Bulgaria?

A6. No. The CAC is a rotational unit falling under the Black Sea Rotational Force, based in Mihail Kogalniceanu, Romania. The equipment is expected to remain in Bulgaria for approximately 18 months.

Q7. What kind of military exercises will the CAC participate in?

A7. The CAC will boost military exercises that have been annually-scheduled and ongoing to improve the capability of the NATO team with their partners in the region. Exercises like the "Platinum series" (which includes Platinum Lion, Platinum Eagle, Platinum Lynx, etc.) can benefit by having the improved capabilities of the CAC to further advance training between the international militaries.

Q8. Which countries are participating?

A8. BSRF-15.2 is scheduled to engage with more than 20 countries to include: Romania, Bulgaria, Latvia, Slovenia, Azerbaijan, Macedonia, Serbia, Estonia, Kosovo, Georgia, Lithuania, Hungary, Armenia, Czech Republic, Poland, Moldova, Albania, Macedonia and Bosnia.

DVIDS Feature Page

<http://www.dvidshub.net/feature/BlackSeaRotationalForce>

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CAMP LEJEUNE HISTORIC DRINKING WATER

BACKGROUND

In the 1980s, certain chemicals that were unregulated at the time were detected in wells of two of Camp Lejeune's drinking water distribution systems. The Marine Corps removed these wells from service the same day they were found to be affected. Since then, the Department of the Navy (DoN) has been working with the state of North Carolina and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to identify and to clean up sites at the base. Independent investigations found no violations of federal law. DoN has worked diligently to identify and to notify individuals who might have been exposed to contaminated water. Scientific and medical studies on this issue continue to investigate whether diseases and disorders experienced by former residents and workers are or are not associated with their exposure to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune. Using good science, DoN's goal is to determine whether previous exposure to the contaminated water at Camp Lejeune resulted in any adverse health effects for our Marines, their families or our civilian workers.

For additional information on this issue, review the Questions and Answers booklet: [Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water Booklet](#) (2012) and the Q&A Booklet addendum (June 2013): https://clnr.hqi.usmc.mil/clwater/Documents/Camp_Lejeune_Addendum_v12.pdf

The President signed the "[Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012](#)" into law. The law provides health benefits for 15 illnesses or conditions affecting veterans and their families who lived or worked at Camp Lejeune, N.C., for at least 30 days during the period from Jan. 1, 1957 to Dec. 31, 1987.

Most recent update: On Nov. 20, 2014, ATSDR's study article "Evaluation of contaminated drinking water and preterm birth, small for gestational age, and birth weight at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina: a cross-sectional study" was released.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate associations between residential prenatal exposure to contaminated drinking water at Camp Lejeune between 1968 and 1985 and preterm birth, small for gestational age (SGA), term low birth weight (TLBW), and mean birth weight deficit (MBW). Birth certificates identified mothers residing at Camp Lejeune at delivery. ATSDR analyzed exposure data for the entire pregnancy and individual trimesters. For each period examined, births were categorized as unexposed if mothers did not reside at Camp Lejeune or if their residence on base received uncontaminated drinking water.

The Provisional PDF and ATSDR's factsheet that include results of the study can be viewed here: <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/sites/lejeune/AdverseBirthOutcomesStudy.html>

For more information about this and other studies being conducted by ATSDR, visit <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/sites/lejeune/> or call (800) 232-4636.

KEY MESSAGE

This is a very important issue for our entire Marine Corps family and a deeply personal matter for Marine Corps leadership. We care about every person who has ever lived or worked at Camp Lejeune. Some members of our Marines Corps family have experienced health issues that they think are associated with the water they used at Camp Lejeune. We are concerned about these individuals, and we are working with leading scientific organizations to seek science-based answers to the health questions that have been raised. We continue our commitment to find and notify those who used the water during the time period in question, and keep them informed regarding the latest scientific and medical information.

CAMP LEJEUNE HISTORIC DRINKING WATER (CONT'D)

TALKING POINTS

TP1. The health and welfare of our Marines, Sailors, their families and our civilian workers are top priorities for the Marine Corps.

TP2. The current drinking water at Camp Lejeune meets all government drinking water standards and is tested more often than required.

TP3. The Corps continues to make progress notifying former residents and workers. We established a call center and registry in 2007 where people can provide contact information so we can notify them and keep them informed as these health studies are completed. We have registered more than 220,000 individuals and mailed more than 200,000 direct notifications.

TP4. The Marine Corps relies on the scientific expertise of outside health agencies such as ATSDR to inform our understanding of this issue. Scientific/medical studies continue to investigate whether diseases and disorders experienced by former Camp Lejeune residents and workers are or are not associated with previous exposure to the drinking water at Camp Lejeune in 1987 or before.

TP5. The President signed the “Honoring America’s Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012” into law. The law provides health benefits for 15 illnesses or conditions affecting veterans and their families who lived or worked at Camp Lejeune, N.C., for at least 30 days during the period from Jan. 1, 1957 to Dec. 31, 1987.

TP6. The Department of the Navy is supporting and working with both the Centers for Disease Control's Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) and the National Academy of Sciences (specifically, the National Research Council (NRC)), and plans to continue support of ATSDR's study of possible associations between Camp Lejeune water exposures and health effects. We have dedicated more than \$30 million to fund these scientific efforts and also are coordinating with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

WEBSITES AND RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

[Official Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water Website](#)

[ATSDR Camp Lejeune Website](#)

[VA Health Benefit Information](#)

POINT OF CONTACT

OUSMCC Media Section, 703-614-4309, ontherecord@usmc.mil

**** Any media queries regarding the Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water issue should be directed to the point of contact at HQMC PA.*

*Any queries from individuals looking to register in the CLHDW notification database should be directed to the CLHDW call center at 1-877-261-9782. ****

CIVIL AFFAIRS TEAM BELIZE

BACKGROUND

January 2015, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, South (MARFORSOUTH) began its first persistent Belize Civil Affairs Team to support U.S. Southern Command. This U.S. Marine Corps Civil Affairs team builds upon ongoing Civil Affairs Engagement Program objectives in the USSOUTHCOM Area of Responsibility and develops capacity to conduct civil military operations with the host nation government, international and non-governmental organizations operating within the country of Belize. CAT Belize is working in Belize to build upon the success of past Civil Affairs efforts and established relationships within the region. CAT Belize is sourced from U.S. Marine Corps Forces, South and the 4th Civil Affairs Group. CAT Belize is enabling our partners, the Belize Defense Force and Belize Coast Guard, to conduct civil military operations that will maintain stability in the country of Belize.

THEMES AND MESSAGES

THE IMPERATIVE OF PARTNERSHIPS IS UNDERSCORED BY EVERYTHING WE DO

- Our approach is based on partnerships — partnerships based on shared values, shared challenges, and shared responsibility.
- We are ready to address transnational security challenges through integrated and coordinated approaches with our partners.

ENGAGED EVERYWHERE

- We are committed to reaching out to all countries in the hemisphere where possible to build strong Military-to-Military ties.
- Transnational security challenges require international cooperation.
- Continuous security cooperation activity with our partner nation Marines provides mutual benefit.
- While we hone our expeditionary skills, our partners hone theirs.

Q&As

Q1. What is CAT Belize?

A1. CAT Belize is a small group of Marines serving as subject matter experts who advise, mentor and train partner nation counterparts to improve our interoperability and to help build their capacity to plan for and conduct civil affairs missions in support of countering regional and transnational threats.

Q2. Was the CAT Belize sent to Belize to make up for partner nation deficiencies?

A2. No. CAT Belize is here to provide different avenues of training to the Belizean military forces that build upon areas in which they already have success. Our team brings a set of training packages to our partners, but these packages are tailored to each mission based on experience and knowledge. If our partner nations have a better way of conducting business, our teams learn just as much from that knowledge.

Q3. Will they all be operating together at all times?

A3. Upon their arrival in Belize, the team will work with various facets of Belizean military forces, international and non-governmental organizations.

Q4. Will anyone from the CAT Belize be involved in actual CTOC, CD or CIT operations?

A4. Marines with the CAT Belize will be involved in training only. Apprehension of suspects is the job of partner nation law enforcement agencies and other authorized forces.

POINT OF CONTACT

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COOPERATIVE STRATEGY 21

“This necessary review has affirmed our focus on providing presence around the world in order to ensure stability, build on our relationships with allies and partners, prevent wars, and provide our Nation’s leaders with options in times of crisis.”

“A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower builds on the heritage and complementary capabilities of the Navy-Marine Corps-Coast Guard team to advance the prosperity and guarantee the security of our Nation.” – Ray Mabus, Secretary of The Navy

CORE MESSAGES

- Highlights importance of maritime domain (integrating air, land and sea and leveraging cyber and space domains).
- Introduces new essential function -- *all domain access* -- and aligns forces and capabilities against regional threats.
- Identifies a naval force as the enabler for access when and where we choose.
- States that our naval forces are stronger when we operate together with allies and partners. Merging our unique capabilities and capacity produces a combined naval effect greater than the sum of its individual parts.
- Defines naval forces as a value to the Nation and its security.
- Emphasizes readiness and offensive capability.
- Reaffirms that maritime forces enable the Nation to provide global security and rapidly respond to crisis throughout the world.

NAVAL INTEGRATION

- Highlights two national principles: 1) forward presence 2) integrated naval forces.
- Guides efforts to remain a capable and combat ready naval force by implementing principles with service-specific documents (i.e. Marine Corps’ Expeditionary Force 21 and Marine Expeditionary Brigade Concept of Operations) and classified supplements.

A2AD

- Introduces a fifth essential function -- *all domain access*. The Sea Services have historically organized, trained, and equipped to perform four essential functions: deterrence, sea control, power projection, and maritime security.
 - *All domain access* describes how we will organize, train, and equip to gain access to areas and operate freely to complete the mission.
 - *All domain access* describes the ability to project military force in contested areas with sufficient freedom of action to operate effectively.
 - *All domain access* describes the maritime /littoral environment as an integrated whole. The naval force can fight across an integrated domain of sea-air-land-cyber-space to shape the environment and lead the fight to gain access for the Joint Force Commander.
 - Identifies challenge to become more offensively capable to defeat the system rather than defensively countering individual weapons.

COOPERATIVE STRATEGY 21 (CONT'D)

COMPOSITING

- Directs conducting sea control and power projection in a more distributed fashion in littoral environments. This includes employing forward deployed and surge expeditionary forces that are task-organized into a cohesive amphibious force in order to provide scalable options to defeat land-based threats, deny enemy use of key terrain, or establish expeditionary advance bases and oceanic outposts as described in CPG and Expeditionary Force 21.
- Serves an integral part of GCCs strategic reach and operational capability by emphasizing the ability to organize and equip and exercise command and control of joint and multinational task forces, ready to respond to crises or contingencies.

AMPHIBIOUS SHIPS

- In January 2009, the Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps established a requirement for 38 amphibious warships to support the assault echelons of two Marine Expeditionary Brigades.
- The "Report to Congress on the Annual Long-Range Plan for Construction of Naval Vessels for Fiscal Year 2016," dated March 2015, states that the Navy will maintain an active inventory of 34 amphibious ships.
- Makes clear that sequestration-level funding would force a decrease in forward presence and reduce surge-ready CSGs and ARGs to an insufficient level to meet planning and strategic requirements.

ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYMENT OF NAVAL PLATFORMS

- Expands the practice of employing adaptive force packages, which tailor naval capabilities to specific regional environments, ensuring that our assets are located where they are most needed...so that more capable ARG/MEUs and CSGs are available for complex missions in other theaters.
- Emphasizes the use new multi-mission vessels such as the Littoral Combat Ship, Joint High Speed Vessel and Afloat Forward Staging Base (AFSB) to support security cooperation, counterterrorism, expeditionary operations, minesweeping and Special Operations Forces.

POINT OF CONTACT:

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DEFENSE POLICY REVIEW INITIATIVE (DPRI)/PACIFIC REALIGNMENT

BACKGROUND

April 26, 2012, the U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee (SCC) reconfirmed that the U.S.-Japan Alliance, supported by a robust U.S. military presence in Japan, including U.S. Marine Corps forces in Okinawa, continues to provide the deterrence and capabilities necessary for the defense of Japan and for the maintenance of peace, security and economic prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region. To achieve the goals of the shared partnership between the two countries, the SCC decided to adjust the plans outlined in the May 1, 2006 SCC Document titled, "United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation" (Realignment Roadmap). As part of these adjustments, the Ministers decided to delink both the relocation of the III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) personnel from Okinawa to Guam and resulting land returns south of Kadena Air Base from progress on the Futenma Replacement Facility.

TALKING POINTS

TP1. The U.S.-Japan alliance is stronger than ever and is the cornerstone of regional security and prosperity.

TP2. The alliance is flexible to adapt to new U.S. initiatives and changing circumstances while maintaining deterrence.

TP3. This agreement helps mitigate the impact of the Marine Corps presence on the Okinawan people and develops Guam as a strategic hub in the region.

TP4. This plan helps achieve a force posture that is geographically distributed, operationally resilient and politically sustainable. The purpose is to better position our forces across the theater in order to enable cooperative security partnerships throughout the region.

TP5. Some 9,000 Marines will be relocated from Okinawa, of which some 5,000 will be relocated to Guam.

TP6. End-state Marine Corps presence remaining on Okinawa will be consistent with the level envisioned in the Realignment Roadmap.

TP7. Consistent with the 2009 Guam International Agreement, Japan will contribute \$2.8 billion in FY08 dollars (\$3.1 billion in FY12 dollars because of inflation) toward facilities for the Marine relocation. Japan will also study developing training ranges in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands for shared use as a part of that cash contribution.

TP8. The governments of Japan and the United States will consider cooperatively developing training areas in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, to be used as shared use facilities by U.S. forces and the Japan Self Defense Forces.

TP9. The United States will return some unused land to Japan immediately and has specified other areas that can be returned after either Japan builds replacement facilities on Okinawa or Marine units have relocated from Okinawa.

TP10. Both sides will contribute to the cost of sustaining Marine Corps Air Station Futenma as an operational facility until a Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF) is operational. The GOJ will focus on project related to safety and environmental impact mitigation.

TP11. The movement of Marines to Guam will not be linked to progress on the FRF.

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DPRI/PACIFIC REALIGNMENT (CONT'D)

WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/04/188587.htm>

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/04/188586.htm>

POINT OF CONTACT

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ENERGY ETHOS

BACKGROUND

In 2013, the Marine Corps Installations Command (MCICOM) Facility Energy (GF-1) issued the *Marine Corps Installations Energy Strategy* to guide how the Marine Corps procures, uses, and measures energy on installations. Unpredictable fuel costs and declining budgets are placing pressures on Base Operating Support (BOS) allocations, while battlefield conditions, natural disasters and enemies threaten our energy security. The Marine Corps has invested roughly \$1B on installation energy efficiency and renewable energy efforts since FY03, resulting in a 19.1% reduction in energy use intensity. Installations are now being charged to reduce utility demand by another 10% by 2020 through behavior change efforts.

TALKING POINTS

Energy Ethos

TP1. Investments in technology have positively impacted the cost of energy; but, technology investments are not enough to drive the Marine Corps to meet installation energy goals – behavior of Marines is another essential aspect. This requires that the Marine Corps adopt what the Commandant terms an 'Energy Ethos' – from bases to battlefield.

TP2. Energy Ethos is the shared vision that the efficient use of energy resources is a critical component of mission readiness.

TP3. Energy Ethos supports the mission by ensuring energy resiliency, reducing facility operating costs, and fostering a culture of efficient energy usage throughout the Corps.

TP4. Under Energy Ethos, Marines consider how they impact energy and water use in their daily activities and strive to reduce their consumption through the development of efficient behaviors.

Unit Energy Manager (UEM) Program

TP5. The Unit Energy Manager (UEM) Program was formally launched on 09 March 2015 with the issuance of the Energy Ethos Campaign and Unit Energy Manager (UEM) Program MARADMIN. The program establishes the foundation and leads the charge for the implementation and adoption of an Energy Ethos in the Marine Corps.

TP6. The UEM Program promotes end-user awareness and behavior change in individual Marines by helping them understand their daily impact on the energy and water footprint and how they can improve their use habits.

TP7. Stakeholders across the Marine Corps, from the Commandant, to Marine Corps Installations Command (MCICOM) Facility Energy (GF-1), to the Expeditionary Energy Office (E2O), recognize a need for the UEM Program.

TP8. The 2011 Expeditionary Energy Strategy states “Tenants and supported commands [will] identify an Energy Manager or representative at the individual unit or tenant level to coordinate unit and tenant involvement and actions as part of the installation’s overall Energy Program.”

TP9. The 2013 Installations Energy Strategy created the UEM Program and asks installation commands and regional commands to participate.

TP10. The 2014 Utility Demand Reduction Guidance calls for a 10 percent reduction in installation utility demand by 2020 against a 2013 baseline, which the UEM Program will help to meet.

The UEM Program:

ENERGY ETHOS (CONT'D)

- Establishes a Marine in each unit as the energy point of contact for Battalion or Squadron Commanders.
- Provides Operational Commanders with greater visibility of energy resources.
- Creates a touch point with Installation Commanders and IEMs regarding energy use within tenant units.

Cost

TP14. Marine Corps installations spent \$262 million on energy in FY13. Utility use makes up approximately 19 percent of Base Operations Support (BOS) funding.

TP15. The Marines Corps is re-entering a period with increased fiscal constraints on our base operating budgets. This requires that we address energy procurement and conservation through a smart combination of technological investment and culture change.

TP16. The Marine Corps has invested nearly \$1B on installation energy efficiency and renewable energy efforts since FY2003, resulting in a 19.1% reduction in energy usage intensity (EUI).

WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION

MCICOM GF-1 - <http://www.mcicom.marines.mil/Units/GFFacilities/GF1Energy.aspx>

POINT OF CONTACT

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EXPEDITIONARY FORCE 21

QUOTE

“What we do on a day-to-day basis is maintain a very high state of readiness for immediate successful crisis response “in any clime and place” and under any condition. Our naval, expeditionary, combined arms nature set in a forward deployed and engaged posture provides combatant commanders with capabilities that are increasingly in demand.” - Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr., the 36th Commandant of the Marine Corps, Commandant’s Planning Guidance 2015

TOPLINE RECURRING THEME

“Forward and Ready: Now and in the Future”

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Expeditionary Force 21:

- Is a design for maintaining and refining a force to meet the combatant commanders’ needs and securing America’s national interests.
- Is driven by the demands of the operating environment, considers the limitations of fiscal realities, is informed by national security strategies, is nested within the maritime strategy and is guided by the Commandant’s Planning Guidance.
- Orients everything the Marine Corps does on combat readiness.

CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATION

- Revalidates Operational Maneuver From the Sea and Ship To Objective Maneuver concepts.
- Does not change what we do, but how we will do it. Our role is enduring.
- Focuses on supporting forward deployed forces and meeting the increasing requirements of the combatant commanders.
- Provides an understanding of how a joint capability can win today and in the future.
- Integrates air and surface capabilities at the seabase.
- Looks closely at crisis response operations in lethal and complex environments.
- Promotes integration of experimentation, combat development and acquisition processes to better deliver the right capabilities at the right time.
- Connects naval war games, table tops and exercises to readiness.
- Prepares the Marine Corps to fight with what the force has today, inform the development of future capabilities and improves support for greater naval, joint and command and control capabilities.

LINES OF EFFORT

1) Refining Our Organization.

- Provides framework for tailoring Marine component and regionally orienting operating forces to geographic and functional combatant command.
- Composites forward and rapidly deployable forces to meet crisis or contingency.
- More closely aligns SOF and expeditionary MAGTFs and further develops Marine Corps reconnaissance capability.
- Develops concepts for securing advanced expeditionary bases of operations as part of a naval campaign.

EXPEDITIONARY FORCE 21 (CONT'D)

2) Adjusting Our Forward Posture.

- Promotes a forward and flexible force with greater proportion and variety over a wider area.
- Modifies traditional employment methods and augments amphibious warships by adapting other vessels for sea-based littoral operations and better supporting forward-based land forces, e.g. operationalizing the MLP, LMSR, T-AKE and JHSV.
- Emphasizes crisis response and building partner capacity as critical to forward-deployed missions.

3) Increasing Naval Integration.

- Intertwined in the maritime Cooperative Strategy 21, which describes how the Sea Services will design, organize, and employ naval forces in support of national security.
- Outlines assimilating operational staffs and compositing naval forces for crisis response.
- Develops and reinforces concepts for a naval approach to littoral operations in a contested environment.
- Sets conditions for a service and naval level Training Exercise and Employment Plan.

4) Enhancing Littoral Maneuver.

- Identifies how the Marine Corps will fight from the sea in the Anti-Access, Area Denial (A2AD) threat environment.
- Sets favorable conditions by reducing enemy capabilities and creating gaps and seams that allows force closure from multiple locations.
- Defines need to operate with reduced signature to multiple penetration points.
- Advocates the capability to maneuver throughout the littorals.
- Continues to prioritize the need for fielding a high-speed, long-range high-capacity system of connectors, amphibious vehicles, boats and ships.

WEBSITE

<http://www.mccdc.marines.mil/EF21.aspx> (Contains a video, supporting documents and briefs)

POINT OF CONTACT

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F-35B LIGHTNING II—JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER

BACKGROUND

The Marine Corps publicly declared Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 121 (VMFA-121) based in Yuma, Arizona IOC July 31, 2015 following a five-day Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI) which concluded July 17.

VMFA-121's transition will be followed by Marine Attack Squadron 211 (VMA-211), an AV-8B squadron, which is scheduled to transition to the F-35B in fiscal year 2016. In 2018, VMFA-122, an F-18 squadron in Beaufort, South Carolina, will conduct its transition to the F-35B. As the future of Marine Corps tactical aviation, the F-35 will eventually replace three legacy platforms: the AV-8B Harrier, the F/A-18 Hornet, and the EA-6B Prowler.

TALKING POINTS

TP1. The F-35 will wield an electronic attack capability, which represents a transformation in electronic warfare spectrum management. This is not possible on our MEU today. The aircraft brings all of the access and lethality capabilities of a fifth-generation fighter, a modern bomber, and an adverse-weather, all-threat environment air support platform.

TP2. The F-35 is the only tactical aviation platform in the world that can go from fifth to fourth, and fourth to fifth generation. No other aircraft can do that, and also operate from amphibious carriers and expeditionary air strips.

TP3. The F-35 preserves U.S. national security and ensures optimum international security across the globe as integrated coalition operations enable the U.S., her NATO Allies and partner nations, as well as the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force to fight shoulder-to-shoulder with different variants of the F-35.

TP4. Advanced avionics equip the pilot with real-time access to battle space information with spherical coverage. Likewise, commanders at sea, in the air or on the ground immediately receive data collected by the F-35's sensors — empowering them with an instant, high-fidelity view of ongoing operations, making the F-35 Lightning II a formidable force multiplier while enhancing coalition operations.

TP5. The Marine Corps' F-35B flew more than 13,000 mishap-free hours as of Sept. 30, 2015. Reliability of equipment and safety of our personnel are among the Marine Corps' top priorities as we continue transitioning our legacy aircraft to the F-35B in the coming years.

TP6. As of Sept. 30, 2015 VMFAT-501 at MCAS Beaufort, South Carolina trained and qualified more than 50 Marine Corps F-35B pilots and certified more than 500 maintenance personnel to assume organic-level maintenance support for the F-35B. We expect those numbers to increase by about 25% per year over the next four years.

Q&A

Q1: What does “initial operational capability” mean for the F-35B?

A1: The F-35B declared initial operational capability in July 2015. U.S. Marine Corps IOC for the F-35B includes the following requirements:

- One squadron of 10 F-35B aircraft with required spare parts, equipment, tools, technical publications, and a functional Automatic Logistic Information System (ALIS Version 2).
- One F-35B squadron manned with trained and certified personnel capable of conducting autonomous operations (90% staffing).
- Aircraft in Block 2B software configuration with the performance envelope, mission systems, sensors and weapon clearances.

F-35B LIGHTNING II—JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER (CONT'D)

- Home base supporting infrastructure and facilities ready and capable of supporting and sustaining operations.
- Qualifications, certifications and L Class ship alterations completed to enable F-35B operations for six aircraft.
- Qualifications and certifications for deploying the F-35B to austere, expeditionary sites.
- Ability to execute close air support; limited offensive and defensive counter air; air interdiction; assault support escort; armed reconnaissance; and limited suppression of enemy air defense missions in concert with Marine Air Ground Task Force resources and capabilities in accordance with paragraph (c) above.

Q2: Is the current version of Block 2B software ready for real-world operations?

A2: Yes. The Block 2B software and configuration with which the Marine Corps reached initial operational capability in July 2015 brings an immediate increase in combat capability compared to legacy aircraft. Most of the deficiencies we track are only considered deficiencies when compared to the F-35B's full combat capability in 2017. The vast majority of testing we have done has verified expected capabilities: successful missile shots; successful steel-on-steel, air-to-ground deliveries; and three successful sea-trials. The F-35B is able to target in real time, talk to forward air controllers over the radio and data-link, and put weapons on target.

Q3: How is the F-35B different than the aircraft we have today? Is the cost worth the improvements in capability?

A3: The multi-service F-35 Lightning II represents a quantum leap in air dominance capability. It combines next-generation fighter characteristics of radar-evading stealth, supersonic speed, fighter agility and advanced logistical support with the most powerful and comprehensive integrated sensor package of any fighter aircraft in history to provide unprecedented lethality and survivability. The F-35B can provide close air support in threat environments where our current platforms would not survive, and the synthetic aperture radar gives us a through-the-weather targeting capability where the majority of our legacy targeting systems are simply ineffective. Furthermore, the F-35B carries more fuel than legacy CAS platforms, giving it more time over the target area. Lastly, the F-35B can carry more ordnance than any legacy aircraft which the Marine Corps employs today.

Q4: What version of ALIS is the Marine Corps currently using?

A4: Automatic Logistic Information System Standard (ALIS) SOU Version 2 was delivered to VMFA-121 in June 2015.

Q5: When is the F-35B first scheduled to deploy, and where is it scheduled to go?

A5: The first Marine Corps F-35B deployment is scheduled to take place in 2017, when VMFA-121 is slated to relocate from Yuma, Arizona to Iwakuni, Japan.

Q6: When will the F-35B reach full-rate production?

A6: The F-35B is scheduled to reach full-rate production in 2018, with 20 to 24 aircraft a year coming off the production line.

Q7: Has the Marine Corps fired live ammunition with the F-35B? If so, when and where?

A7: Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 121, also known as the "Green Knights," have been using live ordnance regularly since 22 June 2015. Pilots have employed the ordnance in multiple restricted areas in southeastern California. During the work up to IOC and during the IOC Operational Readiness Inspection F-35Bs employed both inert and high-explosive munitions in over 30 live ordnance missions. The munitions employed during the exercises were the same as those dropped by legacy Marine Corps fixed-wing aircraft, but the targeting technology used to employ these weapons is significantly different.

F-35B LIGHTNING II—JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER (CONT'D)

During the Readiness Inspection (ORI), the live ordnance deliveries were incorporated into five operational scenarios (Close Air Support, Air Interdiction, Armed Reconnaissance, Offensive Counter Air and Defensive Counter Air). The squadron will continue to employ ordnance in the future as it becomes part of their normal training cycle.

Q8: What does “full operational capability” mean?

A8: Full Operational Capability for the Marine Corps' F-35 program in acquisition terms is defined as the completion of System Design and Development (SDD). F-35B SDD is scheduled for 4th Quarter of Fiscal Year 2017, with completion of the installation of Block 3F software on all Marine Corps F-35 aircraft. (Source: F-35 Lightning II 2014 Selected Acquisition Report (SAR) provided by the F-35 Lightning II Joint Program Office) The requirements for the FOC Block 3F aircraft is programmatically defined in a document called the Operational Requirements Document (ORD). The Marine Corps was intimately involved with the development of what was required by the Program of Record and put into ORD. We expect those capabilities to be delivered in late 2017. Those enhanced capabilities include external weapons, the gun and AIM-9X, enhanced data link capability, better sensor and fusion capability, and a larger aircraft flight envelope.

Q9: When is the AV-8B Harrier scheduled to be replaced with the F-35B?

A9: Harrier squadrons will gradually transition to F-35 squadrons over the next 11 years. The planned sundown for the AV-8B is in 2026. This is, however, subject to review, assessment and final decision in 2019. We intend to extract maximum value and service life out of both our Harriers and Hornets.

Q10: When is the Marine Corps' F/A-18 Hornet scheduled to be replaced with the F-35B?

A10: Marine Corps Hornet squadrons will gradually transition to F35B squadrons over the next fifteen years. The planned sundown for the Marine Corps F/A-18 is in 2030. This is, however, subject to review, assessment and final decision in 2019.

Q11: When is the Marine Corps' EA-6B Prowler scheduled to be replaced with the F-35B?

A11: The sundown of the EA-6B squadrons at Cherry Point will happen on the following schedule: 2016- one squadron; 2017- one squadron; 2018- one squadron; 2019- final squadron. The buildup of F-35 squadrons at Cherry Point is scheduled to begin in 2023. In fiscal year 2016, the Marine Corps' 7588 Naval Flight Officer / EA-6B Prowler Electronic Warfare Officer billets will begin to transition to 7315 Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Officer billets.

Q12: How many F-35s will the Marine Corps buy?

A12: The Marine Corps has a program of record to procure 353 F-35Bs and 67 F-35Cs.

Q13: How much does it cost to build an F-35B/C?

A13: During the current Low-rate-initial-production phase of acquisition, the “flyaway,” or sticker price cost of the F-35B in 2014 was \$134 million, and \$129 million for the F-35C. This cost will reduce as production increases. For more detailed questions, please contact the F-35 Joint Program Office.

POINTS OF CONTACT

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FAMILY ADVOCACY PROGRAM (FAP)

BACKGROUND

Domestic violence and child abuse are crimes. Incidents of domestic violence or child abuse destroy families, impact children, and negatively affect military readiness. The Marine Corps provides prevention education, review and determination of alleged abuse incidents, clinical treatment for families involved in or at risk for violence, home visits for new parents support efforts, case management, and 24 hours a day, 7 days a week victim advocacy services through the Family Advocacy Program (FAP).

TALKING POINTS

TP1. October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) theme for the year 2015 is *"It starts with respect: Live by core values to keep your relationship healthy and strong."*

TP2. Marine and Family Programs, Behavioral Health Branch is presently rolling out the newly endorsed Domestic Violence Focused Couples Therapy Training (DVFCT) for FAP clinicians across installations. DVFCT is intended for a specific group of couples in ongoing relationships where mild-to-moderate abuse has occurred and both partners want to end the abuse in their relationship. The primary goal of DVFCT is to end abuse of all kinds between partners. The secondary goal is to help couples improve the quality of their relationship whether they stay together or separate.

TP3. FAP will continue to implement curricula aimed to reduce incidents of abuse, such as:

- The Period of PURPLE Crying offers caregivers of infants two weeks to four months of age who display constant crying behaviors coping strategies for addressing their stress associated with caretaking.
- Nurturing Parenting Program focuses on increasing nurturing relationships in the parent-child dichotomy associated with parental bonding, attachment, and relational skills building.
- The Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) provides intervention for children that have social, emotional, behavioral, and developmental problems.
- The Skills, Techniques, Options, and Plans (STOP) curricula is a client-centered intervention program aimed at reducing the likelihood of future domestic abuse for individuals that are identified as the aggressor in domestic abuse incidents via techniques such as skills building, homework, and group work.
- Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) is for children and adolescents who are experiencing significant emotional and behavioral difficulties related to traumatic life events.
- Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) is a treatment modality used primarily with adult clients that have been diagnosed with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and related conditions. In CPT, clients work through distressing thoughts associated with traumatic experiences.

RESOURCES/WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

- DSTRESS Line 877-476-7734, www.dstressline.com
- National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
- Military OneSource's Domestic Violence toolkit called "How to Help Service-Connected Victims of Domestic Abuse" and is accessible at <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/health-and-wellness/family-violence>
- SAFE Helpline 1- 877-995-5247
- Marine and Family Programs: www.usmc-mccs.org

POINT OF CONTACT

Ms. Heather J. Hagan, Marine and Family Programs Division, Headquarters, PAO, 703-784-9521, heather.hagan@usmc-mccs.org

FY16 DOD BUDGET REQUEST AND THE IMPACT OF SEQUESTRATION

QUOTE

“What I can guarantee you, Senator, is whatever amount of money the Congress provides, the Marine Corps will build the very best Marine Corps we can. But even at the Budget Control Act levels without sequestration, we will reduce the capacity to the point where we’ll be challenged to meet the current strategy... BCA funding levels with sequester rules will preclude the Marine Corps from meeting the requirements of the Defense Strategic Guidance.”

– Gen. Joseph Dunford, 36th Commandant of the Marine Corps’ Jan. 28, 2015 SASC testimony

BACKGROUND

On Feb. 2, 2015 the FY16 DOD budget was submitted to Congress as part of the overall Presidential Budget. The DOD budget totals \$585.3 billion, of which \$534.3 billion is for baseline funding and \$50.9 billion is for Overseas Contingency Operations. Those amounts are an increase of \$38.2 billion in baseline funding and a decrease of \$13.3 billion in Overseas Contingency Operations – reflecting the end of the combat mission in Afghanistan – from enacted FY15 levels.

The FY16 DOD budget supports the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review’s three pillars: protect the homeland, build security globally, and project and win decisively; as well as reaffirms the QDR’s five key priorities identified: the rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region, a strong commitment to security and stability in the Middle East, a global approach to countering violent extremists, key investments in technology, and strengthening alliances and partnerships around the world.

The Marine Corps’ FY16 total budget request is \$25.3 billion. Of that, \$24 billion is the baseline budget request and \$1.3 billion is for Overseas Contingency Operations. Of note, this total is 4.3% of the overall DOD total, and represents an increase of only \$400 million from the enacted FY15 levels.

Should sequestration return in FY16, the CMC has testified the Marine Corps would be unable to meet the requirements of the Defense Strategic Guidance.

PA POSTURE

Media queries regarding the Marine Corps’ FY16 budget should be directed to OUSMCC’s media section (POC listed below). The following talking points are intended to assist PAOs and leaders in discussing the overall budget with their audiences.

TALKING POINTS

Overall/DOD

TP1. The President’s budget reverses the decline in national defense spending of the past five years to ensure the military can meet the defense needs of our nation in the near term and sets us on a better path to maintain our dominance in the future.

TP2. The FY16 DOD budget represents the minimum resource level necessary to ensure we are a capable, ready and appropriately sized force able to meet existing global commitments and obligations. Yet even at the FY16 level, we continue to need the flexibility to reform and ensure we can get the most out of every dollar spent on defense.

TP3. Reversing the devastating effects of sequestration (set to return in FY16) is the next and most immediate step to protect our nation’s military dominance.

TP4. At full sequestration levels, by 2021 the military will be too small and too outdated to respond to the full range of potential national security threats.

TP5. While some claim this is the DOD’s biggest budget ever, as a share of our economy and of total federal spending, the FY16 budget is at a near-historic low – representing about 3 percent of America’s GDP and 14.3 percent of total federal discretionary and non-discretionary spending. In historic terms,

FY16 DOD BUDGET REQUEST AND THE IMPACT OF SEQUESTRATION (CONT'D)

this is one quarter what it was during the Korean War, one third of what it was during the Vietnam War, and half what it was during the late 1970s/early 1980s defense buildup.

TP6. Military readiness is expensive, but unpreparedness is a cost we cannot accept. Simply put, sending the joint force into a “fair fight” will result in longer conflicts and far more American casualties.

Marine Corps

TP7. Over those past few years of budget cuts and fiscal uncertainty, the Marine Corps has prioritized the readiness of forward-deployed forces. This has, however, required the assumption of risk in the readiness of non-deployed forces, modernization, infrastructure and quality of life programs.

TP8. Approximately half of non-deployed units, which provide the Marine Corps’ Ready Force to respond to unexpected crises, are suffering personnel, equipment and training shortfalls. In a major conflict, those shortfalls will result in a delayed response and/or additional casualties.

TP9. Sequestration would force the Marine Corps to reduce its end strength, resulting in fewer active duty battalions and squadrons than would be required for a single major contingency.

TP10. The Marine Corps is investing in modernization at historically low levels. Over time, that will result in maintaining older or obsolete equipment at a higher cost and more operational risk.

TP11. Finally, the impact of sequestration on Marines should not be underestimated. They should never have to face doubts about whether they will deploy without proper training and equipment. Sequestration would erode the trust that Marines have in their leadership and the Corps, and the cost of losing that trust is incalculable.

POINT OF CONTACT

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KEEPING FAITH

QUOTE

“The term Marine is synonymous with young men and women who are disciplined, smart, physically and mentally tough, and who remain always faithful to each other and to our Corps.”

– Gen Joseph F. Dunford, 36th Commandant of the Marine Corps

TALKING POINTS

TP1. The Marine Corps' greatest asset is our Marines.

- The bedrock of the United States Marine Corps is our Marines. We value the men and women who have answered the call to serve as a Marine.
- Our mission is to create quality Marines thus returning better citizens back to communities across our Nation.
- The Marines who have faithfully served throughout the last decade have made invaluable contributions to our national security and our efforts overseas. We recognize their efforts and appreciate their service.

TP2. The health and welfare of our Marines, Sailors and their families are a top priority for the Marine Corps.

- We will ensure that all Marines (including single Marines that make up the majority of the Corps), Sailors and their families have availability and access to quality facilities and support programs, as well as resources and benefits that provide a quality standard of living.
- We know that behind each Marine is a support network that enables the Marine to effectively do their job, whether on the front lines or the home front.
- We have an array of assistance programs to support the health of our Marines and their families, including behavioral health, suicide prevention, substance abuse treatment and family advocacy.

TP3. Taking care of our wounded, ill and injured and their families is a responsibility the Corps takes seriously.

- The Wounded Warrior Regiment provides and facilitates assistance to wounded, ill and injured Marines and their family members, throughout the phases of recovery.
- Access to trained legal counsel is available to wounded, ill and injured Marines throughout the Disability Evaluation System (DES) process to ensure their interests are protected.
- We will enhance the capabilities of the Wounded Warrior Regiment to provide added care and support to our wounded, injured and ill Marines.

TP4. As the mission changes overseas, we will conduct a smooth drawdown in the size of force that maintains the faith of our Marines and families, as well as meets the demands of national security.

- Our goal is to reduce end strength through the normal attrition processes.
- We will make concerted efforts to retain the most talented and qualified men and women who bring a diversity of background, culture and skill in service to our Nation
- We think focused leadership at all levels is the key to having an effective drawdown process.

TP5. Once a Marine, always a Marine. There is no such thing as a former Marine.

- The Marine Corps believes in taking care of its own, and that commitment does not end when they leave active duty.
- We have launched an end-to-end transition assistance process improvement plan that directly improves the quality of support provided to our Marines from enlistment to post separation.

POINT OF CONTACT

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Current as of: Thursday, October 08, 2015

MARINE CORPS 101

QUOTE

As the Nation's crisis response force and force in readiness, Marines remain forward deployed, ready to fight and win tonight. As Marines have always done, we will continue to seek new opportunities and develop solutions that maintain an overwhelming tactical advantage over any adversary.

- General Robert B. Neller, 37th Commandant of the Marine Corps

TALKING POINTS

TP1. The Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) is the Marine Corps' principal organization for conducting missions across the range of military operations. MAGTFs provide combatant commanders with scalable, versatile expeditionary forces.

TP2. Marine Expeditionary Units (MEU) operate continuously across the globe and provide the President and the unified combatant commanders with a forward-deployed, flexible sea-based MAGTF. MEUs are capable of conducting amphibious operations, crisis response and limited contingency operations.

TP3. The Corps has about 184,200 active-duty Marines, 39,600 in the Selected Marine Corps Reserve, and 68,000 in the Individual Ready Reserve. Some 30,100 Marines are deployed across the globe.

TP4. The final force structure will include 24 infantry battalions, as well as the implementation of 18 MV-22 squadrons. It also allows for such enduring presences as seven MEUs, SPMAGTFs – Crisis Response AF, CENT, and SOUTH, Marine Rotational Force Darwin, enhanced Cyber capabilities, and increased embassy security personnel.

TP5. For 7% of the DoD Budget, the Marine Corps provides America with:

- 21% of the infantry battalions
- 15% of the Fighter/Attack Aircraft
- 11% of the Artillery Batteries
- 7 flexible and scalable MEUs

TP6. About 37% of Marines are lance corporals and below – our most junior ranks in the Marine Corps, and 61% of Marines are 25 years-old or younger. Fewer than one in nine is an officer.

MORE INFORMATION

View the latest Marine Corps 101 Presentation, attached, by clicking on the paperclip to the left of the Adobe screen.

POINT OF CONTACT/SOURCING

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MARINE CORPS FORCE INTEGRATION PLAN (MCFIP)

QUOTE

"I want you to know that Sergeant Major Green and I are very proud of all the Marines involved with the Marine Corps Force Integration Plan, especially those involved in or with the Ground Combat Element - Integrated Task Force. You Marines are true patriots, volunteering both your time and effort to make the Marine Corps better. I want to ensure you that your personal efforts have helped me to make the most informed decision possible and have also changed our Corps for the better. Semper Fidelis Marines"

– Gen Joseph F. Dunford, 36th Commandant of the Marine Corps

BACKGROUND

In January 2013, the Secretary of Defense rescinded the 1994 Direct Ground Combat and Assignment Rule which restricted women from assignment to 'units whose primary mission is to engage in direct combat on the ground,' and directed each of the services to open all military occupational specialties and units to females by Jan. 1, 2016. The Marine Corps took a deliberate, measured and responsible approach to assess the units, occupational fields and specific military occupational specialties that are closed to our female Marines. The output of each Line of Effort (LOE) and its associated studies helped to inform CMC decisions to open additional MOSs and units to female Marines or ask for exceptions to policy. This information also supported the development and validation of occupation specific, operationally relevant, gender neutral standards, physical assessments, and assignment policies.

FOUR LINES OF EFFORT

LOE 1: Since 2012, we have assigned female officers and staff non-commissioned officers in open MOSs to 20 of our non-infantry, combat arms battalions at the headquarters level. Based on the experiences of integrating female Marines in those battalions, we are extending the assignment of female Marines in these units to include non-commissioned officers and expanding assignments down to the company and battery level in logistics, communications, and administration positions. To date, 83 female NCOs have reported to 17 of the 20 artillery, tank, and assault amphibian ground combat units that have been opened under LOE 1. MarAdmin 589/14 was released outlining the expansion of assignments:<http://www.marines.mil/News/Messages/MessagesDisplay/tabid/13286/Article/172214/announcement-of-change-to-assignment-policy.aspx>

LOE 2: We expanded our entry-level training research effort that began at Infantry Officer Course and Infantry Training Battalion. Upon graduation from recruit training, female Marines were able to volunteer for infantry and non-infantry (AAV and Tank Crewman, and Artillery Cannoneer) combat arms-MOS training schools prior to attending their assigned MOS training school. Female Marine company grade officers from the operating forces and supporting establishment were also afforded the opportunity to volunteer for Infantry Officer Course.

LOE 3: From Oct 2014 through July 2015, the Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force conducted individual and collective level skills training in designated ground combat arms occupational specialties in order to facilitate the standards based assessment of the physical performance of Marines in a simulated operating environment performing specific ground combat arms tasks. The GCEITF was designed to help the Marine Corps understand, from a quantitative perspective, the physical demands required to perform ground combat arms tasks in Operating Forces (OpFor) units. The purpose was twofold. First, the GCEITF was meant to help the Marine Corps build a data set that supported the establishment of gender neutral MOS-specific physical standards and assessments. Second, the GCEITF was meant to help leadership determine the effects (if any) that gender integration could have on ground combat arms small unit mission effectiveness. All training and research was in accordance with the Human Research Protective Program (HRPP).

MARINE CORPS FORCE INTEGRATION PLAN (CONT'D)

LOE 4: The Marine Corps opened 11 MOSs in three Occupation Fields encompassing 2122 positions. Of the 335 total MOSs, 315 MOSs are currently open to female Marines (144,000 positions total). The NDAA-mandated congressional notification period began in May 2014, and was completed in July 2014.

11 MOS's Opened to Female Marines 16 July 2014

0803	Targeting Acquisition Officer*
0842	Field Artillery Radar Operator*
0847	Field Artillery Sensor Support Marine*
2110	Ordnance Vehicle Maintenance Officer*
2131	Towed Artillery Repairman/Tech*
2141	Assault Amphibious Vehicle Repair*
2146	Main Battle Tank Repair*
2147	Light Armored Vehicle Repair/Tech*
2149	Ordnance Vehicle Maintenance Chief*
7204	Low Altitude Air Defense Officer
7212	Low Altitude Air Defense Gunner

ADDITIONAL STUDIES:

In support of the MCFIP, the Marine Corps directly or through 3rd parties, conducted more than 35 studies and reviews within the time allotted to ascertain the impacts, benefits, risks, and potential mitigation measures of a fully gender integrated ground combat force. This effort included visits to allied militaries which had experienced gender integration into ground combat arms, equipment adaption studies, literature reviews, surveys and focus groups. In addition to the Marine Corps Operation and Analysis Division and the Marine Corps Operation Test and Evaluation Activity, the following external research partners supported the MCFIP:

- Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)
- University of Pittsburgh Warrior Human Performance Research Center
- Michigan State University
- George Mason University
- Research and Development (RAND) Corporation
- Center for Naval Analyses (CNA)
- Naval Health Research Center (NHRC)

A MCFIP status update was included in the quarterly and subsequently semi-annual Women in the Service Review (WISR) written updates provided to the Secretary of the Navy and Secretary of Defense. Additionally, a MCFIP update brief was provided to Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) "Tank" sessions on a quarterly basis over the past year as a part of regularly schedule JCS WISR updates.

TALKING POINTS

TP1. The Marine Corps utilized the time afforded by the Secretary of Defense to take a systematic approach to integrating women into combat arms specialties by research, assessment and validation of current occupational standards.

TP2. General Dunford provided his recommendation to the Secretary of the Navy in private and believes that his best military advice should remain private during the deliberation process until the Secretary of Defense has reviewed all inputs and made a decision.

TP3. The Marine Corps is following all guidance from OSD concerning the release and transparency of all gender integration research.

POINT OF CONTACT:

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Current as of: Thursday, October 08, 2015

MARINE ROTATIONAL FORCE-DARWIN

BACKGROUND

In November of 2011, U.S. President Barack Obama and former Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard announced the deployment of U.S. Marines to Darwin and Northern Australia, for approximately six months at a time, where they will conduct exercises and training on a rotational basis with the Australian Defence Force. The first two deployments consisted of approximately 200 Marines each and occurred in 2012 and 2013. The deployment in 2014 consisted of approximately a 1,150 member Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF).

Approximately 1,176 Marines deployed to Darwin, Australia, in 2015 for Rotation II, Phase II of Marine Rotational Force-Darwin (MRF-D). These Marines arrived in April and will remain for approximately six months as the fourth rotation of MRF-D. Most of the Marines come from the 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, stationed at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. The Aviation Combat Element (ACE) includes four CH-53E Super Stallion helicopters from Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 463 (HMH-463), based at Marine Corps Base Hawaii.

KEY MESSAGES

- MRF-D is a cost-effective way to expose U.S.-based Marine units to various training environments while maintaining readiness and military partnerships with the Australian Defence Force and regional partners throughout Southeast Asia.
- MRF-D exercises the interoperability and combined capability of a Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) alongside our Australian allies. Military relationships between the United States and our partner nations are critical to maintaining balance and stability across the globe.
- United States' vital interests are best served by having forward-positioned maritime forces around the globe, postured for contingencies, and committed to the overall cooperative security in the region.

TALKING POINTS

TP1. The rotational Marine Corps deployment to Darwin is a tangible demonstration of the United States' sustained commitment to the U.S.-Australia alliance and to the Asia-Pacific region. Our Marines operate together with our allies and partners to enhance regional security cooperation activities, disaster relief response capabilities, and the ability to respond to various crises throughout the region due to proximity.

TP2. Marine community engagements in the Northern Territory are intended to add depth to our relationship with Australia. Beyond purely military training, we greatly appreciate Australia's hospitality and believe we have much to learn, and much to share, with our gracious hosts.

TP3. The U.S. Marine Corps and the Australian Defence Forces are committed to continuing our tradition of more than 100 years of global partnerships and security cooperation between Australia and the United States of America. U.S. military-ADF relations date back to the early 20th century and we have been coalition partners in every significant conflict throughout the world, including World Wars I and II, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan.

DVIDS Unit Page

<http://www.dvidshub.net/unit/MRF-D>

POINT OF CONTACT

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MEU TRACKER

11th MEU

After a seven-month deployment marked with conducting some of the first strikes in support of Operation Inherent Resolve, humanitarian assistance in the northwestern Hawaiian islands, and theater security cooperation exercises in Bangladesh, Malaysia, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia, the 11th MEU returned home in February, 2015.

- Commanding Officer: Col Clay C. Tipton
- PAO: Maj. Craig W. Thomas, craig.thomas@usmc.mil
- Web: <http://www.11thmeu.marines.mil/>
- Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/11thmeu>
- Twitter: <http://twitter.com/11thmeu>
- Photos/Video: <http://www.dvidshub.net/unit/11meu>

13th MEU

The 13th MEU is currently preparing for its upcoming deployment. 13th MEU components for the deployment include BLT 2/1, VMM-166 (REIN) and CLB-13.

- Commanding Officer: Col Anthony M. Henderson
- PAO: Capt. Brian S. Villiard, brian.villiard@usmc.mil
- Web: <http://www.13thmeu.marines.mil/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/13thMEUView>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Official13thMEU>
- Photos/Video: <https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/13MEU>

15th MEU

The 15th MEU departed in May for a seven-month long deployment in the 5th and 6th Fleet AORs. The 15th MEU is deployed aboard the Essex Amphibious Ready Group aboard the USS Essex (LHD 2), USS Anchorage (LPD 23), and USS Rushmore (LSD 47). 15th MEU components include BLT 3/1, VMM-161 (REIN) and CLB-15.

- Commanding Officer: Col Vance L. Cryer
- PAO: Capt. Brian T. Block, brian.block@usmc.mil, brian.block@essex.usmc.mil
- Web: www.15thmeu.marines.mil
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/15thMarineExpeditionaryUnit
- Photos/Video: www.dvidshub.net/unit/15MEUPA
- Twitter: www.twitter.com/15thMEUOfficial
- Flickr: www.flickr.com/photos/15thmeu/
- YouTube: www.youtube.com/The15thMEU

22nd MEU

Since de-compositing in December 2014, the MEU Command Element began preparing for the unit's pre-deployment training program.

- Commanding Officer: Col Todd P. Simmons
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- Twitter: https://twitter.com/22nd_meu
- Photos/Video: <http://www.dvidshub.net/unit/22meu>

24th MEU

The 24th MEU recently returned from deployment with the Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group aboard the USS Iwo Jima (LHD-7), USS New York (LPD-21), and USS Fort McHenry (LSD-43).

- Commanding Officer: Col Ryan S. Rideout
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- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/24thmeu>
- Photos/Video: <http://www.dvidshub.net/unit/24meu>

26th MEU

The 26th MEU is currently preparing for its upcoming deployment. 26th MEU components include BLT 2/6, VMM-162 (REIN), VMA-223 and CLB-26.

- Commanding Officer: Col Robert C. Fulford
- PAO: Capt. Lindsay Pirek, lindsay.pirek@usmc.mil
- Web: <http://www.26thmeu.marines.mil/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/26MEU>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/26meu>
- Photos/Video: <https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/26MEU>

31st MEU

The 31st MEU is currently embarked aboard the USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6), USS Green Bay (LPD 20) and USS Ashland (LSD 48). The 31st MEU is the only continually forward-deployed MEU. 31st MEU components include BLT 2/5, VMM-265, VMA-311 (-) and CLB-31.

- Commanding Officer: Col Romin Dasmalchi
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- Web: www.31stmeu.marines.mil
- Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/31stMEU>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/31stmeu>
- Photos/Video: <http://www.dvidshub.net/units/31MEU>
- YouTube: www.youtube.com/the31stmeu

BACKGROUND

Since World War II, in nearly every crisis, the Marine Corps has deployed projection forces, with the ability to move ashore with sufficient sustainability for prolonged operations. These forces have been organized into Marine Air Ground Task Forces (MAGTF), a combination of air, ground and support assets. MAGTFs are established for specific missions, or in anticipation of a wide range of possible missions. Combining air, ground and logistic assets maximizes the combat power of each of the war fighting elements. MAGTFs have long provided the United States with a broad spectrum of response options when U.S. and allied interests have been threatened and in non-combat situations that require instant response to crisis. Selective, timely and credible commitment of air-ground units have, on many occasions, helped bring stability to a region and sent signals worldwide to aggressors that the United States is willing to defend its interests, and it is able to do so with a significantly powerful force on extremely short notice.

The Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) is the smallest of the MAGTFs and comprises about 2,200 Marines and Sailors. Its major elements are the Command Element (CE), the Ground Combat Element (GCE), the Aviation Combat Element (ACE), and the Logistics Combat Element (LCE).

The CE comprises the commanding officer and supporting staff – about 200 Marines and Sailors. It provides the overall command and control essential for effective planning and execution of operations

and synchronizes the actions of each element within the MEU. Skill sets falling under the command element include: administration, intelligence, operations, logistics and embarkation, communications, legal and public affairs.

The GCE is built around an infantry battalion and provides the overland combat power for the MEU. Assets inherent within the standard infantry battalion include: medium and heavy machine guns, mortars, combined anti-armor teams and scout snipers. While assigned to the MEU, the unit, designated a Battalion Landing Team, is reinforced with light armored reconnaissance vehicles, tanks, artillery, combat engineers and assault amphibian vehicles.

The ACE is a composite squadron that provides the MEU medium to heavy lift capability, assault support and close air support (CAS). Its assets include: MV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft or CH-46 Sea Knight medium lift helicopters, CH-53E Super Stallion heavy lift helicopters, AH-1 Super Cobra helicopter gunships, UH-1 Huey utility helicopters and AV-8B Harrier jump jets. With a force strength of approximately 500, the ACE includes air traffic control, aircraft maintenance/support and aviation logistics/supply capabilities.

The LCE, about 250 Marines and Sailors strong, provides combat support such as supply, maintenance, transportation, explosive ordnance disposal, military police, water production and distribution, engineering, medical and dental services, fuel storage and distribution, and other services to the deployed MEU. The LCE gives the MEU the ability to support itself for 15 days in austere expeditionary environments.

TALKING POINTS

TP1. MEUs operate continuously across the globe and provide the President and the unified combatant commanders with a forward-deployed, flexible sea-based MAGTF.

TP2. The distinct ability of amphibious forces to gain access to critical areas anywhere in the world with ground, air and logistics forces enables the Navy-Marine Corps team to shape actions across the range of military operations to resolve conflict, conduct humanitarian assistance or combat the enemy in remote, austere environments that would otherwise be inaccessible.

TP3. With the increasing concentration of the world's population close to a coastline, the ability to operate simultaneously on the sea, ashore, and in the air, and to move seamlessly between these three domains represents the unique value of amphibious forces.

TP4. "Expeditionary" is not a bumper sticker to us, or a concept, it is a "state of conditioning" that Marines work hard to maintain.

TP5. We are the nation's crisis response force of choice. We have a unique capability to respond to today's crises, with today's force – today.

TP6. Always ready when the nation is least ready, Marines are either forward deployed or capable of deploying, often from the sea, on short notice to crises around the world.

POINT OF CONTACT

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MV-22 OSPREY

BACKGROUND/STATEMENT:

The V-22 is the world's first production tiltrotor aircraft. Unlike any aircraft before it, the V-22 successfully blends the vertical flight capabilities of helicopters with the speed, range, altitude and endurance of fixed-wing turbo-prop aircraft. This unique combination provides an unprecedented advantage to warfighters, allowing current missions to be executed more effectively, and new missions to be accomplished that were previously unachievable in legacy platforms. It is the ideal platform for joint and combined operations with our NATO Allies and partner nations.

The MV-22B Osprey is the U.S. Marine Corps' version of this aircraft. The incredible effectiveness and survivability of the Osprey continue to be utilized for Marine Operations in every clime and place be it land-based operations in Iraq and Afghanistan to sea-based operations in Haiti, Libya and the Philippines. As the U.S. Marine Corps continues to transition its aviation platforms in the years ahead, the MV-22B's revolutionary capability will remain a cornerstone of the Marine Air Ground Task Force.

The Marine Corps will be procuring 360 aircraft to support operations worldwide. More than 242 Marine Corps MV-22B aircraft are operating around the globe today, transforming the way the Marine Corps conducts assault support, humanitarian relief operations and the broad spectrum of MAGTF missions.

Service variants: Marine Corps: MV-22 / Navy: C/MV-22 / Air Force/Special Ops: CV-22

TALKING POINTS:

TP1. Following its development as the world's first production tilt-rotor aircraft, the MV-22B has not only emerged as a safe and reliable aircraft, with 242 operating around the globe today, but continues to transform the way the Marine Corps conducts assault support.

TP2. The MV-22 is safe: it has a Class A mishap rate of 3.20 per 100,000 flight hours since FY10, on par with other Marine Corps aviation platforms. Moreover, the MV-22 had the lowest Class A flight mishap rate of all Marine rotorcraft through the first 200,000 flight hours. Thanks to material solutions, bi-annual software updates, enhanced pilot training and increased familiarization with the aircraft, the MV-22 has shed the early perception that it is a troubled airframe.

TP3. Since 2007, the MV-22 has continuously deployed in a wide range of extreme conditions, from the deserts of Iraq and Libya to the mountains of Afghanistan and Nepal, as well as aboard amphibious shipping. Thanks to its speed, maneuverability, and numerous capabilities, the MV-22 is in high demand among commanders worldwide, and it has already surpassed 223,000 flight hours conducting many types of missions.

TP4. The recent cross deck exercise with French Navy's BPC Dixmude (June 2015) is yet one more example of how the MV-22B Osprey provides commanders with unprecedented flexibility and operational reach. As the U.S. Marine Corps continues to transition its aviation platforms in the years ahead, the MV-22B's revolutionary capability will remain a cornerstone of the Marine Air Ground Task Force. This capability will be expanded with the Trident Juncture 15 exercise being conducted in November. The MV-22Bs from the SPMAGTF-CR-AF will conduct operations aboard the Spanish Amphibious Assault ship, the Juan Carlos, and the United Kingdom's HMS Ocean.

TP5. The MV-22 is extremely survivable: for example, aircraft engaged in the close-in, kinetic fight in Operation Enduring Freedom took small arms, rocket-propelled grenade and heavy machine gun fire on multiple occasions. In every case, they were able to safely continue flight to friendly territory.

MV-22 OSPREY (CONT'D)

TP6. The MV-22 is able to carry a significantly greater payload than the aircraft it is replacing, the CH-46, at twice the speed and range – more than 60% greater range than any other rotorcraft, and more with aerial refueling. In addition to assault support, additional mission sets being implemented for the MV-22 include aerial refueling of tactical, tiltrotor and rotary-wing aircraft, as well as intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions.

TP7. The MV-22B is an extremely maneuverable aircraft with a large and versatile operating flight envelope which far outstrips that of the legacy CH-46 helicopter it replaced. That envelope, and the procedures which govern the safe operation of the aircraft, are effective in both combat and peacetime operations. There are no separate aircraft operating limitations for either environment.

TP8. The V-22 Aerial Refueling System (VARS) is scheduled to be operational on Marine Corps MV-22 Ospreys by Fiscal Year 2018. Marine VARS enables refueling of Marine fixed wing tactical aviation platforms and other rotary wing platforms with about 4,000 pounds of fuel at VARS' initial operating capability. MV-22 VARS capacity will increase to 10,000 pounds of fuel by 2019. This will significantly enhance range, as well as the aircraft's ability to remain on target for a longer period, to include: the CH-53E/K; other MV-22s; the F/A-18; and the AV-8B. Overall, VARS will be a huge force multiplier for a sea-based MAGTF.

TP9. The Marine Corps is working with industry partners to source the revolutionary MV-22 digital interoperability (DI) assets. The number one advantage in utilizing this capability is increased situational awareness that translates into flexible, responsive options for the Marine Air Ground This DI package is currently being utilized by the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit. The 2015 Marine Corps Aviation Plan identifies the DI program of record and path forward with the Software Reprogrammable Payload (SRP) initial operating capability, scheduled for 2017. The MV-22 will be the first Marine Corps aviation platform to be equipped with SRP.

TP10. To take full advantage of the success of tiltrotor technology, we plan to field the next version of the MV-22 in the mid-2030s. This aircraft will take advantage of technologies spurred by the ongoing joint multi-role and future vertical lift efforts, and other emerging technology initiatives.

Q&As

Q1. Late in OEF, the final squadron of Ospreys in Afghanistan received an ECASEVAC mission for southern Afghanistan. What were the lessons learned and the findings regarding the squadron's success with that mission?

A1. The V-22 was ideally suited for this mission set. ECASEVAC doubled the distance from friendly positions which the ground combat element could safely operate while remaining within the, "golden hour." The golden hour refers to the target time that a CASEVAC helicopter can respond to a call, pick up the injured or wounded individual, and fly them to a Coalition medical facility. The key to the success of the unit was the squadron's aggressive refinement of the techniques and procedures for executing missions.

Q2. How many Marine Corps MV-22s are in Block C? Is there any plan for Block B aircraft to be converted to Block C?

A2. We currently have 107 Block C MV-22s in the inventory, and will ultimately have 205 when the program of record is complete. There is currently no plan to convert block B's into C's. We are currently modifying all Block A's to Block B's.

MV-22 OSPREY (CONT'D)

Q3. What is the difference between Block B and Block C software for the MV 22B?

A3. The enhancements for the Block C's over the Block B's are as follows:

- Environmental Control System "air conditioning")
- Inclusion of a weather radar
- A troop Commander Situation Awareness Station (a tethered display where commander can observe the moving map)
- Forward Firing Countermeasures
- Software upgrades that enhance the algorithms that affect hovering and fuel system logic
- An improved engine starter valve
- An enhanced Standby Flight instrument (now digital vice analog)

TRANSITION

- The VMM community transition is 70% complete
- East Coast transition is complete; six VMMs transitioned.
- MAG-16 transition is complete; six VMMs transitioned.
- MAG-39 is transitioning 2 squadrons (VMM-164 and VMM-364) VMM-364 is IOC and VMM-164 has completed their Safe for Flight Inspection (SFF) and on target for a Q2 FY16 IOC.
- Okinawa has two squadrons supporting MEU operations.
- One new squadron (VMM-362) to stand up at Miramar in FY-18.
- One new squadron (VMM-212) to stand up at New River in FY-19.
- Two VMM squadrons (268/363) from Miramar to move to Hawaii in FY-17/18.
- Reserve squadron (VMM-764) transitioning from CH-46 to MV-22, complete in FY-16.
- Reserve squadron (VMM-774) transitioned from CH-46 to MV-22. They began receiving MV-22s in 4th Q FY-15, IOC in 3rd Q FY-16; FOC in FY-18.

DVIDS Feature Page

<http://www.dvidshub.net/feature/MV22Osprey>

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PACIFIC REORIENTATION

QUOTE

“Our recommendations [on rebalance] were guided by an updated defense strategy that builds on the president's 2012 defense strategic guidance. This defense strategy is focused on: defending the homeland against all strategic threats; building security globally by projecting U.S. influence and deterring aggression; and remaining prepared to win decisively against any adversary should deterrence fail. To fulfill this strategy, DOD will continue to shift its operational focus and forces to the Asia Pacific, sustain commitments to key allies and partners in the Middle East and Europe, maintain engagement in other regions, and continue to aggressively pursue global terrorist networks.”

- Chuck Hagel, Secretary of Defense, Feb. 24, 2014

TALKING POINTS

TP1. The Marine Corps is adjusting its force lay-down in the Asia-Pacific region to support the President's Strategic Guidance for the Department of Defense issued in January 2012.

TP2. The concept of the preeminent importance of the Asia-Pacific region has long been part of our national strategy. This initiative by the U.S. government to refocus toward the Pacific is primarily diplomatic and economic, with the military playing a complementary role.

TP3. The U.S. rebalance to Asia encompasses all aspects of U.S. engagement – diplomatic, economic, political, and military – as well as support for and participation in key multilateral institutions. Through this rebalance, the United States is committed to broadening the robust ties to regional Asia-Pacific partners.

TP4. America has always been and will remain heavily invested in and committed to the Asia-Pacific. The United States traded \$2.38 trillion in goods and services with Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) countries in 2011, amounting to 56 percent of total U.S. trade. This trade of goods and services has increased 135 percent from nearly \$1 trillion in 1994 and continues to increase.

TP5. Beyond our shared economic ties, five of the United States' seven major defense treaties are with Asia-Pacific nations and we have many more strong and enduring partnerships in the region. The Marine Corps' rebalance efforts in the Pacific are focused both on creating and strengthening partnerships with other nation's militaries. These efforts are also aligned with the Defense Guideline's direction for "innovative, low-cost and small-footprint approaches to achieve our security goals."

TP6. We envision an Asia Pacific in which all countries cooperate to advance our common interests in the face of natural disasters and rogue elements which would disrupt the common values of security, stability and prosperity.

TP7. We seek to have balanced capabilities strategically located between Hawaii, Guam, Japan and Australia so that we can train, exercise and operate with allies and partners, and to be able to respond to crises and promote security cooperation across the region.

TP8. The Marine Corps is a force perfectly designed and suited for both crisis response and the Asia-Pacific maritime environment. In partnership with the U.S. Navy, U.S. Marines are America's proven crisis response force, ready to help an ally in trouble or protect vital interests.

PACIFIC REORIENTATION (CONT'D)

TP9. Two-thirds of the Marine Corps' operational forces are assigned to the Pacific. This allocation of resources is intuitive given the vast maritime and littoral nature of the theater. Our weighted presence is also appropriate in that our primary functions are to assure littoral access to the joint force commander and respond to crises. Having a versatile, experienced, ready-to-respond force like the Marine Corps in the region helps ensure the peace, stability, and prosperity that benefit everyone.

TP10. The Marine Corps is the training partner of choice for the region, especially partnered with the Navy. The Navy-Marine Corps team has the skill sets and the resources our partners and allies in the region want, and we have built the rapport and trust that successful relationships require, ensuring we can work together when we need to. This is exemplified by the more than 70 different training exercises and expertise exchanges we conduct every year with partners and allies throughout this region.

TP11. We see South Korea, Japan, Russia, the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, India, Australia and many other regional nations such as the Maldives, Vietnam, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Singapore and New Zealand interested in developing or improving their ability to respond to natural or man-made crises from the sea. Each nation's military possesses different capabilities and capacities to respond to these crises, and they understand they need to train so they can rapidly respond when needed. The Marines are eager to train with each of them. We tailor our Marine Air-Ground-Logistics teams to train with each nation when and where they want, and train to the capability and capacity they want.

TP12. U.S. Marines are organized, trained and equipped to operate from ships, from the air, and ashore. This integrated force, the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF), is the key to Marine operations and provides a balanced, combined-arms force which is expandable, adaptable, and tailorable to the mission.

TP13. The Asia-Pacific region's strategic importance by the numbers:

- The Pacific encompasses more than half of the world's surface area and 61% of the world's population.
- 40 percent of the world's trade transits the Strait of Malacca.
- Five of our nation's most important mutual defense treaties are with nations in the Asia-Pacific region.
- 13 of the 15 megacities in the Asia-Pacific are within 100km of the coast
- Seven out of 15 trading partners for the U.S. are in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Natural disasters killed an average of more than 70,000 people every year of the last decade in Asia and the Pacific.

DVIDS Feature Page

<http://www.dvidshub.net/feature/Marinesinthepacific>

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RECRUITING

RECRUITING 101 BACKGROUND

QUALITY: The quality accessions delivered to today's Marine Corps are the dividends of investments made to recruiting four to five years ago. Quality enables today's Marines to win today's battles.

RESOURCES: Today's investment in recruiting provides the future, smaller and more agile Corps with the capability required to deliver the quantity and quality of new accessions required with higher steady-state annual accession mission, which is in line with 30-year historical averages (i.e. approximately 38,500 NPS enlisted).

- MCRC personnel are always operational and committed to supporting the institution. Maintaining personnel (Marines and Civilians) is the most critical asset to respond to expected higher missions (starting in FY16) and undoubtedly tougher market conditions.
- Advertising is a key component that drives success in our recruiting efforts. Adequate funding ensures we achieve nationwide basic awareness levels, resource the most cost-effective lead generation programs, and address the increasing number of critical audiences to include our diversity outreach.

DIVERSITY: The Marine Corps is committed to making concerted efforts to attract, mentor and retain the most talented men and women who bring a diversity of background, culture and skill in service to our nation.

RECRUITING 101 TALKING POINTS

TP1. Recruiting has been and will continue to be the lifeblood of the United States Marine Corps, regardless of end-strength requirements. A lower end-strength for the Corps doesn't equate to 'easier' times for Marine Corps Recruiting. Our Recruiting Force is faced with many challenges and obstacles -- but the high caliber Marines we have serving in the trenches throughout the Nation continue to 'make mission' and meet the missions assigned by the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

TP2. 99.8% of current recruits are high school graduates (DoD stand is 90%), and 74% score in the top three tiers of the Armed Forces Qualification Test (DoD standard is 60%).

TP3. Recruiting quality youth ultimately translates into higher performance, reduced attrition and increased retention, which equates to lower costs and improved readiness for the operating forces.

TP4. Quality saves money. Research has proven that increased accession quality is directly linked to decreased boot camp attrition and premature first-term separations. Quality accessions save the Marine Corps and American tax payer money.

TP5. The future, smaller and more agile Marine Corps will require a sustained investment in recruiting resources in order to access the best and brightest of America's sons and daughters.

TP6. Investing in a diverse and representative officer corps will help generate and sustain a future force that has the cultural expertise, language skill sets and a variety of philosophies needed to meet the operational requirements of the Marine Corps.

RECRUITING(CONT'D)

TP7. In total, recruiting a quality and representative force costs less than 1% of the Marine Corps' overall budget. A significant overcorrection of resources allocated in support of the Marine Corps' recruiting efforts would threaten enduring new accession quality and combat capability.

TP8. The Marine Corps Recruiting Command has approximately 3,760 Marines currently serving as canvassing recruiters. These Marines are in every community of our Nation delivering our 'Tough, Smart, Elite Warrior' message of opportunity to young men and women, educators, coaches, influencers and parents. To accomplish the recruiting mission assigned by the Commandant of the Marine Corps, our recruiters must overcome myriad challenges -- but they continue to successfully meet assigned recruiting missions, while maintaining and exceeding Department of Defense quality standards.

DIVERSITY TALKING POINTS

TP1. During FY15, MCRC will continue to reinforce efforts to recruit a diverse officer corps, which remains a fundamental component of the officer accession mission and a priority of the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

TP2. In FY14, diversity officer accessions accounted for 21.99% of the total officer accessions, exceeding the Marine Corps Recruiting Command's (MCRC) five year average of 19.7%

TP3. The FY14 diversity officer accession success is a direct result of the hard work of our officer recruiting force and benefits from our office of diversity engagement initiatives.

TP4. Investing in a diverse and representative officer corps will help generate and sustain a future force that has the cultural expertise, language skill sets and a variety of philosophies needed to meet the operational requirements of the Marine Corps.

TP5. The Marine Corps is devoted to educating the American public on Marine Corps values and presenting opportunities to those individuals who possess the aspiration and determination to join our ranks. These initiatives will help generate and sustain a force that has the cultural expertise, language skill sets and a variety of philosophies needed to meet the operational requirements of the Marine Corps.

TP6. The strategic end-state of the Marine Corps' Diversity Program is to strengthen our connectedness with the American people.

TP7. America's Marine Corps deserves to be led by a diverse and representative officer corps. MCRC is committed to improving diversity representation within our leadership ranks since we have integral role at the accession point. It is the recruiting command's aspiration to re-invigorate the Marine Corps' connectedness with the American people on whom the Marine Corps' success or failure ultimately depends.

TP8. Marine Corps Recruiting Command (MCRC) has taken deliberate actions to increase diversity accessions and outreach, such as implementing an "All Community Approach" to planned engagement events, reprioritizing elements of our advertising program, new efforts to increase awareness of scholarship opportunities, and the continuous analysis of prospecting and processing activities.

1. The following is a breakdown of FY14 'diversity' enlisted accessions:

African-American: 11.77%

Asian: 3.01%

Other: 1.77%

Hispanic: 24.13% (*Hispanics are an ethnic group – not a race*)

RECRUITING (CONT'D)

2. The following is a breakdown of FY14 'diversity' officer accessions:

African-American: 4.71%

Asian: 4.11%

Other: 5.29%

Hispanic: 7.86% (Hispanics are an ethnic group – not a race)

3. FY14 enlisted and officer female accessions:

Enlisted: 9.41%

Officer: 11.61%

'HOME OF THE BRAVE' PROSPECT CAMPAIGN BACKGROUND

As the nation continues to look toward the Marine Corps as America's force in readiness, Marine Corps Recruiting Command stands ready to find the most qualified individuals to serve in the Marine Corps. Every few years, MCRC evaluates how to attract the next generation of men and women to serve as Marines. MCRC must remain positioned to continue telling the longer Marine Corps Story of Making Marines, Winning Our Nation's Battles, and Developing Quality Citizens. MCRC discovered through diligent research and testing that America's youth are increasingly more drawn toward helping people in their communities and around the globe. Expanding on messaging first introduced in ***Toward the Sounds of Chaos***, MCRC is embarking on a new campaign known as ***Home of the Brave***. In the campaign, two new commercials were released, ***'Wall'*** and ***'The Land We Love'***. Both commercials assist in demonstrating the Corps' abilities to always be ready in any clime and place when the nation needs us most. Commercials debuted on 17 March 2015.

TALKING POINTS

TP1. Research tells us the Marine Corps has an opportunity to leverage an increased stake in the nation among a broader cross-section of youth and this is a historic point in time. ***Home of the Brave*** enables the Marine Corps to attract recruits of optimal quality and establishes the foundation for fully representing the American people when we embark upon missions.

TP2. The goal of ***Home of the Brave*** is to recruit a force representative of the nation it serves while maintaining the highest quality, historical standards and warfighting ethos; stressing the stake that all race and cultural groups have in our country and in its defense.

TP3. The greatest challenge facing the Corps is that young people do not perceive military service as aligning with their modern view of the nation or what they believe to be tenets of public service. ***Home of the Brave*** illustrates a more contemporary view of the nation and the breadth of Marine Corps missions as both a call to national service and service to our communities.

TP4. Two campaign commercials communicate the unique roles the Marine Corps plays for our citizens, our culture, our country and those who have served. In total, the communication strategy for the campaign was established as: 'Marines defend and reflect the ideals of a nation in which we all have a stake'.

TP5. ***'Wall'*** delivers the message: **'Marines defend a nation comprised of brave, determined people who take action against injustice. The Marines exemplify that spirit and are inspired by it'**.

TP6. ***'The Land We Love'*** depicts a relatable America. **'Diverse people and communities; one common country'**.

RECRUITING (CONT'D)

TP7. We want the campaign to appeal to the priorities and interests of the millennial generation, motivating them to consider service to their nation as a Marine. This campaign's modern approach should ensure people from diverse backgrounds understand that the Marine Corps recognizes them as equal partners in a nation where battles come in many forms.

TP8. Marine Corps advertising is bold and revolutionary; from iconic ads depicting the struggle and transformative power of becoming a Marine, such as *America's Few*, to the most recent campaign, *Toward the Sounds of Chaos*, vividly portraying the breadth and importance of Marine Corps' missions. ***Home of the Brave*** is equally innovative, showing a uniquely modern, millennial-driven interpretation of America, patriotism, and service.

TP9. ***Home of the Brave*** demonstrates the Marine Corps' deep understanding of the fact that Americans from all backgrounds and cultures are equal partners in this nation. Furthermore, it carries forward elements of *Towards the Sounds of Chaos* by continuing to demonstrate the diversity of Marine Corps missions and the importance of service.

DVIDS Unit Page

<http://www.dvidshub.net/unit/MCRC?#.VA32xktNyro>

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SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE (SAPR)

BACKGROUND

The Department of Defense (DOD) Fiscal Year (2014) Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military was released on 1 May 2015 and consists of four components: DOD Overview, DOD Statistical Analysis, Service-Specific Assessments, and the RAND Military Workplace Study. Key Marine Corps findings include the following:

- Approximately 1,000 (30%) fewer Marines experienced unwanted sexual contact in FY14 (~2,300) than in FY12 (~3,300).
- In that same two-year timeframe, official reports of sexual assault increased by 94% (453 in FY12 to 880 in FY14).
- Of the DOD women who reported a past-year unwanted sexual contact, 62% also indicated some kind of negative perceptions often associated with retaliation.
- Approximately half of the ~2,300 Marines who experienced unwanted sexual contact in FY14 are male, but only 22.1% of reports were filed by male victims.
- Marine women were most likely to experience sexual harassment violations and gender discrimination. Male and female Marines overall regard sexual harassment and gender discrimination as more common than most other service members of the same gender.
- Our capacity to prefer and court-martial sexual assault cases continues to increase. The number of court-martial charges preferred for sex-related offenses increased from 113 in FY13 to 175 in FY14. The number of court-martials proceeding to trial increased from 90 in FY13 to 112 in FY14 for sex-related offenses.
- The percentage of victims declining to participate in the Marine Corps justice system has decreased from 16% in FY11 to 9% in FY14.

On 14 July 2015, the Commandant's SAPR Campaign Plan officially entered Phase III (Sustainment), marking a major milestone in the three-phased plan to eliminate sexual assault from the Corps. The magnitude of this transition cannot be overstated.

- Between FY12 and FY14, the Marine Corps expended more than \$16 million toward SAPR and special victim legal training initiatives, including a 300% increase in full-time SAPR personnel in the field, a 144% increase in HQ-level SAPR personnel, and the establishment of the Victims' Legal Counsel Organization.
- The start of Phase III was based upon the assessed success of Phase I (Strike) and Phase II (Implement), and the integration of behavioral health programs (e.g., substance abuse, suicide prevention, etc.) into a holistic, truly sustainable effort.
- While recognizing more must be done to ultimately eliminate sexual assault in the Corps, that SAPR was able to accomplish so much in such a relatively short time is commendable. The end state of Phase III is an evolved culture that is non-permissive to **any** form of misconduct.

TALKING POINTS

TP1. The Marine Corps is seeing positive indicators of SAPR progress, with a decrease in prevalence and an increase in reporting levels, suggesting that our efforts are working to both prevent this crime and increase confidence in our response system.

- The number of Marines experiencing unwanted sexual contact, while trending downward, is unacceptable and in direct opposition to our core values. One sexual assault is too many. We owe it to each Marine to provide world-class victim services, to hold offenders appropriately accountable, and to enact programs that will lead to the prevention of this crime.

SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE (SAPR) (CONT'D)

TP2. Despite promising data trends, the Marine Corps does not confuse progress with victory. We must continue to increase reporting and decrease prevalence. Specifically, prevalence is still relatively high among female Marines; reporting is low among male Marines; perceived retaliation exists across the DOD; and sexual harassment is more closely linked to sexual assault than highlighted in the past.

TP3. The Marine Corps takes allegations and acts of retaliation against victims very seriously. Retaliatory behavior—whether on duty, on liberty, or online—is detrimental to victims and to unit cohesion and readiness.

- A new DOD Task Force chaired by Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel & Readiness) will work closely with SAPR stakeholders to direct a comprehensive and phased plan to combat retaliation. The end state will be standardized means to define, track, and respond to reports of retaliation.
- While all Marines must do their part to stop retaliation, unit leaders are the center of gravity. Our service-wide campaign to address retaliation gives unit leaders the policy, training, and guidance tools necessary to accomplish their mission.

TP4. Recent Marine Corps SAPR initiatives have focused on male victim reporting, including a social media campaign designed to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and encourage male victims to come forward. In April 2015, a series of public service announcements launched on official Marine Corps social media sites, addressing male victims, hazing-related sexual assaults, bystander intervention, and retaliation.

TP5. The FY14 Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military highlights several areas of concern besides sexual assault, including retaliation, sexual harassment, gender discrimination, and hazing. The Marine Corps is taking immediate and long-term steps to further address these issues, recognizing that they do not occur in the context of just one issue, such as sexual assault, and thus require a multidisciplinary approach.

TP6. Command is a central pillar of military effectiveness. Success in combat is directly related to the Commander's ability to enforce his or her orders and standards. The Commander is also central to sexual assault prevention, setting and enforcing a command climate of zero tolerance for sexual assault in line with Marine Corps orders.

- Removal of a Commander's convening and disposition authority will adversely affect good order, discipline, and combat readiness.
- Marines must know that their Commander sent a Marine to court-martial, not an unknown judge advocate, who plays no daily role in developing and maintaining the bond of trust essential to combat effectiveness.

WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

- SAPR Website: www.usmc-mccs.org
- DoD Website: www.sapr.mil

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SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE GUIDANCE

BACKGROUND

In today's complex and decentralized information environment, the Marine Corps recognizes the value of Marines sharing their experience of service via social media. The Marine Corps encourages its personnel to engage in social media communities while remaining mindful of propriety, personal privacy and operational security considerations. The social media handbook, The Social Corps, outlines the Marine Corps' social media principles to empower Marines to participate with our social media community. The intent is to engage in greater discussion as even better communicators and improved representatives of our Corps. The handbook, combined with other references available on Marines.mil's social media page, helps guide and assist commanders' and Marines' activities relative to the social/online environ.

TALKING POINTS

TP1. The social media handbook does not restrict a Marine's right to freedom of speech, but rather advises Marines how their comments can be used by the media or others, making them de facto spokespersons for the Marine Corps

TP2. The Marine Corps encourages its personnel to engage in social media communities using sound judgment and common sense, adhering to the Marine Corps' core values of honor, courage and commitment, following established policy, and abiding by the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).

TP3. The Marine Corps respects the rights of its Marines to use social media platforms as a form of ethical self-expression, and also as a means to further share our Marine Corps' story.

TP4. Consistent with personal privacy and operational security considerations, Marines should only discuss Marine Corps issues related to their own professional expertise, personal experience, or personal knowledge.

TP5. Commanders are responsible to educate their Marines, civilians, contractors, and family members on the benefit of routinely reviewing their online and social media presence and behavior.

TP6. Marines and civilian personnel must ensure their social media/online footprint and habits do not compromise their personal or operational security.

REFERENCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

MARADMIN 173/15: [Review of Online Personal Information and Habits](#)

USMC Social and Online Guidance: <http://www.marines.mil/News/SocialMedia.aspx>

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SPECIAL-PURPOSE MAGTF CRISIS RESPONSE

Background

The U.S. Marine Corps is the Nation's Crisis Response Force forward deployed and poised to rapidly respond to crises within the arc of instability and within regions of anticipated future conflicts.

The three-ship Amphibious Ready Group (ARG)/Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) remains the most capable forward deployed MAGTF in providing crisis response, deterrence, and decision time across the range of military operations. SPMAGTF-CR's are not comparable to a dedicated ARG/MEU in the region but rather, complementary; they rely on host nation approvals for access, basing, overflight, launch, post-mission recovery, and sustainment training.

Since the Benghazi attack, Marines have deployed or re-positioned in response to regional unrest in the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) and U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) areas of responsibility. In a rapidly changing security environment, AFRICOM registered a requirement for a self-deployable, self-command and controlled crisis response force capable of protecting U.S citizens, interests, and other designated missions within USAFRICOM Area of Responsibility (AOR).

In 2013, the Marine Corps responded with a SPMAGTF-CR to provide a regionally-based, maritime-capable, expeditionary construct capable of conducting crisis response and limited contingency operations. The SPMAGTF-CR is intended to fill the crisis response gap when ARG/MEUs are not allocated in support of USAFRICOM or USEUCOM requirements. In October 2014 a second SPMAGTF-CR was created in CENTCOM to oversee multiple requests for forces and provide an additional crisis response force.

Per Expeditionary Force-21, SPMAGTF-CRs are instrumental in providing the right force in the right place at the right time.

SPMAGTF-CRs conduct crisis response, contingency operations, theater security cooperation, enabling operations and all other missions as may be directed throughout the COCOM to support requirements in the "New Normal" environment.

They are characterized as:

- Land-based, Self-Supporting, Self-Sustaining
- Capable of command and control at multiple locations simultaneously
- Postured to respond to requirements across the full range of military operations, anywhere within their respective area of operations
- Enduring short-notice crisis response capability

SPECIAL-PURPOSE MARINE AIR-GROUND TASK FORCE CRISIS RESPONSE-AFRICA

"Our natural way of cooperating – side by side, with shared goals and mutual respect – does a lot to engender a positive view ... Gabon agreeing to serve as a Cooperative Security Location is just another example of our excellent military cooperation."

- Cynthia Akuetteh, U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Gabon, July 2015

BACKGROUND: SPMAGTF-CR-AF is a rotational self-command and controlled, self-deploying, and highly mobile crisis response force allocated to U.S. Africa Command to respond to missions in permissive and uncertain environments to protect U.S. personnel, property, and interests in the AFRICOM area of responsibility.

The official request for forces for a SPMAGTF-CR-AF was made in February 2013, and the Marine Corps established the initial force in March 2013. SPMAGTF-CR-AF made the Transatlantic flight of (2) KC-130Js and (6) MV-22B Ospreys to Morón Air Base, Spain in April 2013. Although positioned in Europe, SPMAGTF-CR-AF operates in support of USAFRICOM. Forward-basing of the SPMAGTF-CR-AF in Europe increases the capability of the command to rapidly respond to incidents on the continent of Africa in support of USAFRICOM combatant commander's contingency requirements.

Historically, the force has repositioned to respond to unrest and contingency operations seven times: May, September, October, and December 2013; July and October 2014; and finally in March 2015.

On June 17, 2015, the Deputy Secretary and Deputy Foreign Minister Ignacio Ybanez signed an amendment to the Agreement on Defense Cooperation (ADC) with the Spanish government to change the current deployment of the SPMAGTF to Morón from temporary to permanent and authorized an increase in U.S. personnel and aircraft (2,200 personnel and 36 aircraft maximums). The amendment must still be ratified by the Spanish Parliament before being finalized.

CAPABILITIES AND MISSIONS

SPMAGTF-CR-AF is postured to respond to a broad range of military operations in the AFRICOM region, including: U.S. Embassy reinforcement, fixed-site security, non-combatant evacuation operations, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations, tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel, theater security cooperation, and other missions as directed. Additionally, SPMAGTF-CR-AF can serve as the lead element, or the coordination node, for a larger joint/combined element.

SPMAGTF-CR-AF also conducts military-to-military training exercises throughout the AFRICOM and the EUCOM areas of responsibility. Working with partner nations promotes regional stability on the European and African continents. These partnerships are at the core of dealing with regional issues and keeping peace in the region.

COMPOSITION

SPMAGTF-CR-AF is a rotational contingent of approximately 1,750 Marines, sailors and support elements sourced from subordinate units within II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C. Its organic assets include (12) MV-22B Osprey tiltrotor aircraft, (4) KC-130J Hercules aerial refueling tankers, (1) UC-12, a logistics and sustainment element, and a reinforced company of infantry Marines.

The headquarters and crisis response force accounts for about 800 Marines and sailors and is located aboard Morón Air Base, Spain. SPMAGTF-CR-AF Detachment A is located aboard Naval Air Station Sigonella, Italy, with approximately 300 Marines and sailors focused on conducting theater security engagements throughout Africa. In addition to the forces positioned in Spain, an infantry company with enablers of about 250 Marines subordinate to SPMAGTF-CR-AF is positioned out of Mikhail Kogalniceanu, Romania. The company is collocated with the Black Sea Rotational Force, also at MK.

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SPECIAL-PURPOSE MARINE AIR-GROUND TASK FORCE
CRISIS RESPONSE-AFRICA (CONT'D)

This company is also allocated to USAFRICOM in order to provide additional rapid response forces to the African continent.

- Command Element: 6th Marine Regiment Headquarters; Col Calvert Worth, Commanding Officer
- Aviation Command Element: VMGR-252 (KC-130J); VMM-261 (MV-22)
- Ground Combat Element: 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment (Kilo, Lima, Golf and Weapons Co.)
- Logistics Combat Element: Combat Logistics Battalion 6

ADDITIONAL SOURCES:

<https://www.facebook.com/USMCFEA>

<https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/USMCFE>

POINT OF CONTACT:

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hector.alejandro@usmc.mil

SPECIAL-PURPOSE MAGTF CRISIS RESPONSE-CENTCOM

BACKGROUND

The Marines and sailors of Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force - Crisis Response - Central Command serve as the Marine Corps' land-based, expeditionary crisis and contingency force in U.S. Central Command. This forward unit has become an integral part of Operation Inherent Resolve, providing kinetic and non-kinetic strike capabilities, aviation logistics support to operations across Iraq, a dedicated Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel force, and the insertion and sustainment of the Advise and Assist and Build Partner Capacity missions aboard Al Asad Air Base, Iraq.

Aside from operations directly supporting OIR, SPMAGTF-CR-CC provides diplomatic security forces to U.S. embassies in multiple countries and worked with the Jordanian Armed Forces to develop and professionalize a first-of-its-kind Quick Reaction Force. The command's partnership extends to other nations in the region through numerous Theater Security Cooperation Exercises that have included: Cougar Voyager (Kuwait), Iron Magic (U.A.E.), Red Reef (Saudi Arabia) and Eager Resolve (Kuwait).

In its first iteration, the unit accomplished the following significant achievements: first Marine Corps aircraft to fly missions over Syria, first Marine Corps aircraft to conduct strikes in Iraq and Syria, first OIR personnel recovery force, and the creation, operation and sustainment of the first conventional Building Partner Capacity mission in Iraq.

THEMES AND MESSAGES

CRISIS RESPONSE

- SPMAGTF-CR-CC is a fully capable crisis response force with the ability to project power over vast distances using organic air and ground combat assets.
- Being forward deployed and based in several locations with host nation concurrence allows the SPMAGTF-CR-CC to react to a variety of contingencies with little notice.

THEATER SECURITY COOPERATION

- By training, enabling, and increasing the capacity of our partner nation's security forces and militaries, SPMAGTF-CR-CC TSC events may lessen the need for large scale U.S. involvement in the region.
- Having SPMAGTF-CR-CC Marines in the CENTCOM AOR to conduct joint military training with regional partners strengthens our strategic relationships and enhances regional stability.

ENGAGEMENT

- SPMAGTF-CR-CC continues to provide a crisis response force to the Marine component and Combatant Commander, ready to respond as contingencies occur.
- SPMAGTF-CR-CC's core mission set provides operational flexibility to the CENTCOM AOR, with forces actively training the Iraqi Security Forces in Iraq, providing TRAP and airstrike support to Operation Inherent Resolve, and supporting other TSC events concurrently.

Unit Makeup

- Command Element-7th Marine Regiment Headquarters; Col Jay Bargeron, Commanding Officer
- Aviation Command Element- VMGR-352 (KC-130); VMM-165 (MV-22); VMA-232 (F/A-18)
- Ground Combat Element- 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment
- Logistics Combat Element- Combat Logistics Battalion 7

Point of contact

1stLt Matthew Gregory, SPMAGTF-CR-CC PAO, DSN: 302-324-9256, matthew.gregory@me.usmc.mil

SPECIAL-PURPOSE MAGTF-SOUTHERN COMMAND

BACKGROUND

June 2015 to November 2015, U.S Marine Corps Forces, South will support the SPAMAFTF-SC deployment of 280 Marines and sailors to the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility. The purpose of this deployment is to conduct Security Cooperation in order to support USSOUTHCOM and Country Team objectives, while being prepared to provide emergency response and other requirements as directed by the Combatant Commander.

SPMAGTF-SC is sourced mainly II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C. This deployment will enable our partners to improve the security of their populations and be able to provide humanitarian assistance/disaster relief in case of a major disaster.

THEMES AND MESSAGES

SMALL AND TEMPORARY PRESENCE

- The SPMAGTF-SC is a temporary deployment from June-November coordinated closely with our partners in the region, with their consent and close cooperation.
- SPMAGTF-SC is the first Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task force solely dedicated to the USSOUTHCOM area of responsibility on a temporary basis.
- SPMAGTF-SC is small in size, approximately 280 Marines and Sailors across the region, with capabilities that will support engineering assistance projects in Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador and Belize; and will be available to support disaster relief and disaster preparedness if tasked to do so by the U.S. Government.

PARTNERSHIPS

- Our approach is based on partnerships — partnerships based on shared values, shared challenges, and shared responsibility
- While we hone our expeditionary skills, our partners hone theirs.
- SPMAGTF-SC's air element will self-deploy four CH-53E helicopters and personnel to Soto Cano to provide integral and host nation air support.
- SPMAGTF-SC's ground element will operate from disparate locations throughout northern Central America; its integral Security Cooperation Team will conduct a seamless transition with the currently deployed SC Team, to maintain a persistent presence with the Brigadas de Infantería de Marina (BIM) in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador, as well as with the Belize Defense Force/Belize Coast Guard.
- SPMAGTF-SC will conduct military-to-military training /exercises throughout Central America, primarily focusing on building partner nation capacity. These partnerships are at the core of dealing with regional issues and overcoming shared challenges within the region.

POINT OF CONTACT

Maj. Armando A. Daviu, MARFORSOUTH PAO, (305) 437-2554, armando.a.daviu.mil@mail.mil

INFANTRY SQUAD LEADER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

BACKGROUND

The Squad Leader Development Program (SLDP) was created to ensure small unit leaders are provided with the tools necessary to operate in more complex, distributed environments. The SLDP focuses on second-term enlisted infantry Marines and is scheduled for initial implementation in 2015. SLDP was designed to professionalize the squad leader billet by synchronizing the professional military education and advanced infantry training associated with a Marine Sergeant serving as an infantry squad leader.

The Squad Leader Development is the sole means of attaining the sergeant-only MOS of 0365. There exist two tracks through which the 0365 MOS is attained.

- Operating Forces Track: Marines selected for SLDP are sent to attend the Infantry Small Unit Leaders Course (ISULC) and the Sergeant's Course. Upon completion, they are sent to an infantry battalion as a squad leader.
- Combat Instructor Track: Marines selected for SLDP are sent to the Marine Combat Instructor School (MCIS) and conduct a shortened combat instructor tour. Subsequently, they are sent to ISULC and the Sergeant's Course and, upon completion of those courses, sent to an infantry battalion as a squad leader.

TALKING POINTS

TP1. The program supports the tenants of Commandant's Planning Guidance, EF 21, and underscores the importance of leader development and professional military education to the Marine Corps.

TP.2 The SLDP creates a process where the best qualified Marines are selected to become infantry squad leaders. Units will benefit by having SLDP Marines dispersed throughout the battalion structure, providing well-trained leaders versed in complex and distributed operations. Newly-trained 0365s will arrive at their battalions just prior to the unit's pre-deployment training program (PTP), thus maximizing unit cohesion by establishing steady leadership throughout workups and deployment.

TP3. Marines selected for SLDP will be receive pay bonuses, will have prioritized training and education through ISULC and the Sergeant's Course, and will have a guaranteed assignment to an infantry squad leader billet. Corporals selected for SLDP will be automatically promoted to sergeant.

WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

[SLDP MARADMIN](#)

POINTS OF CONTACT

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MGySgt Justin Aiken, PP&O Infantry Occupational Field Manager, (703) 697-4036, justin.aiken@usmc.mil

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

BACKGROUND:

Saving lives requires vigilance. Engaged leaders are alert to those at risk for suicide and are ready to take action to help Marines address issues and foster hope and connectedness. Each tragic loss to suicide has far reaching impact on families, friends, and Marines. At the unit level, suicide effects morale, unit cohesion, and ultimately unit effectiveness and the readiness of Marines.

TALKING POINTS:

TP1. The summer months are the highest risk period for suicide in the Marine Corps. Transitions during the summer months can erode support networks. Warning signs of suicide can be subtle, but recognizing these signs can prevent suicide:

- Appearing overwhelmed by recent stressors
- Experiencing a fall from glory, loss of honor, change in status within unit or relationship
- Withdrawing from friends, family, and society and losing interest in hobbies, work, school, or other things one used to care about
- Feeling hopeless, helpless, and worthless
- Talking about feeling trapped—like there is no way out of a situation
- Having a recent suicidal ideation
- Making comments that suggest thoughts or plan of suicide

TP2. Common risk factors and triggers that should not be ignored are legal or disciplinary problems, relationship problems, and financial problems. Substance abuse, behavioral health diagnosis, and Permanent Change of Station (PCS) problems appear to increase risk for suicide.

TP3. The Marine Intercept Program (MIP) establishes procedures to ensure standardized coordination of care and follow up for all Marines and attached Sailors known to have had a suicidal ideation or attempt. MIP provides caring contacts, safety monitoring, and care coordination.

TP4. The DSTRESS Line provides Marines, attached Sailors and family members “one of their own” to speak with about everyday stress. DSTRESS Line is available 24 hours, 7 days a week. The anonymous hotline phone number is 1-877-476-7734 and the website for chat access is www.dstressline.com. DSTRESS Line is also available through Skype.

TP5. Conquering Stress with Strength is the newest practical application workshop facilitated by partnership between Behavioral Health and Family Readiness. It is family-focused training providing skills to effectively respond to high-stress situations that include suicide prevention.

WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION

Marine and Family Programs: www.manpower.usmc.mil/familyprograms

POINT OF CONTACT:

Ms. Heather J. Hagan, Marine and Family Programs Division Headquarters PAO, 703-784-9521, heather.hagan@usmc-mccs.org

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAM (SAP)

BACKGROUND

The Substance Abuse Program (SAP) achieves its mission by providing a full spectrum of evidence-based programming including prevention and education initiatives, substance use disorder (SUD) counseling, and cutting-edge drug and alcohol deterrent activities.

TALKING POINTS

TP1. Drinking too much alcohol increases risk of injuries, violence, sexual assault, liver disease, and some types of cancer. The goal of the SAP is to reduce the likelihood of substance misuse for Active and Reserve Marines and Sailors, as well as their families. SAP increases the operational readiness and health of the Marine Corps by providing timely, effective substance misuse deterrent measures, as well as unsurpassed prevention, intervention, and treatment services.

TP2. SAP collaborates with other programs such as the Community Counseling and Family Advocacy within the Marine and Family Programs Division, as well as the Navy Bureau of Medicine and various community partners to better facilitate integration and coordination of services across the Marine Corps. This goal is achieved through the utilization of an integrated prevention and care model, individualized planning, and warm hand-offs.

TP3. Counseling services for Substance Use Disorders (SUDs) address a wide range of issues: relationships, stress management, and emotional regulation, as well as specific substance misuse issues including alcohol, illicit drugs, and the misuse of prescription drugs.

RESOURCES/WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

Marine and Family Programs: www.usmc-mccs.org

DSTRESS Line 877-476-7734, or website: www.dstressline.com

Military One Source website: www.militaryonesource.mil

POINT OF CONTACT

Ms. Heather J. Hagan, Marine and Family Programs Division, Headquarters, PAO, 703-784-9521, heather.hagan@usmc-mccs.org

THE GREAT GREEN FLEET

BACKGROUND: In 2009, SECNAV established five energy goals to reduce the Department of the Navy's consumption of energy, decrease its reliance on fossil fuels, and significantly increase its use of alternative energy. One of the five energy goals is to deploy the "Great Green Fleet." The first half of the GGF goal was achieved during the Rim of the Pacific Exercise 2012, when the Navy successfully demonstrated a combined use of energy efficient systems and alternative fuels in an operational setting. Deployment of the GGF in 2016 will achieve the second half of the SECNAV goal and usher in a new era of energy independence and energy security for the DoN. The GGF effort will utilize multiple air and surface platforms in distributed maritime operations, working in concert with existing Fleet schedules, throughout calendar year 2016.

The Great Green Fleet will be an important demonstration of the Department of the Navy's commitment to advanced alternative fuels as a drop-in replacement for petroleum fuels. In tribute to President Theodore Roosevelt's Great White Fleet, which helped America's emergence as a global power at the beginning of the 20th century, we have named this effort the Great Green Fleet to help maintain America's military and economic leadership in the 21st century.

PURPOSE

We are transforming the Department of the Navy's energy use to make us better warfighters, deploying next-generation capabilities that boost combat effectiveness, maximize strategic options, and better protect our Sailors and Marines.

The Marine Corps will support the execution of the Great Green Fleet (GGF) deployment in 2016. The goal of GGF 2016 is to demonstrate the U.S. Department of the Navy as a global leader in the use of energy efficient systems and alternative energy in a deployment long, operational setting.

THEMES

COMBAT ADVANTAGE – Optimizing energy use is a force multiplier that can increase range, endurance, and payload.

STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE – Diversifying our energy sources arms us with operational flexibility and strengthens our ability to provide presence, turning the tables on those who would use energy as a weapon against us.

FORCE PROTECTION ADVANTAGE – Using energy efficiently takes fuel convoys off the road and reduces the amount of time our ships are tied to oilers at sea, reducing vulnerabilities to Sailors and Marines.

KEY MESSAGES

- The Marine Corps supports SECNAV's energy initiatives and the deployment of the Great Green Fleet in 2016, demonstrating global leadership operational energy.
- Energy expeditionary ethos = faster, lethal, austere, more effective fighting force.
- We do not do 'green' for sake of green. We are focused on energy because it increases Marine Corps readiness and improves the combat effectiveness.
- Expeditionary energy initiatives lighten the load and increase efficiency for Marines at the tip of the spear, farthest away from operating bases where the risk is highest on the battlefield.
- Marines need to treat fuel like the treat ammunition—make every gallon count. This will make our deployed forces more effective in training and in combat.
- Energy efficiency enables combat capability and mission accomplishment—increases operational reach, agility, and range.

THE GREAT GREEN FLEET (CONT'D)

- Using energy efficient technologies increases combat effectiveness. We proved this in Afghanistan and it will be more true on future battlefields.
- A more efficient force will:
 - Reduce tactical and strategic vulnerabilities.
 - Improve our combat capability.

EXAMPLES:

- Minimize fuel/battery resupply requirements.
- Reduce idle time and fuel use.
- Quieter operations.
- Limit the number/type/weight of batteries carried by dismounted troops (lighter loads).
- Extend operational reach.

Q&As:

Q1: How will GGF help our Marines in the field?

A1: It will help them in 3 key areas:

- Combat Advantage – Optimizing energy use is a force multiplier that can increase range, endurance, and payload.
- Strategic Advantage – Diversifying our energy sources arms us with operational flexibility and strengthens our ability to provide presence, turning the tables on those who would use energy as a weapon against us.
- Force Protection Advantage – Using energy efficiently takes fuel convoys off the road and reduces the amount of time our ships are tied to oilers at sea, reducing vulnerabilities to Sailors and Marines.

Q2: Can you give us a few examples?

A2: Of course, energy efficient technology facilitates a lighter and faster force whose self-reliance will foster combat effectiveness and minimize fuel/battery resupply requirements.

- Reduce idle time and fuel use.
- Quieter operations.
- Limit the number/type/weight of batteries carried by dismounted troops (lighter loads).
- Extend operational reach

Q3: So has the Marine Corps gone “green”?

A3: We do not do ‘green’. We are focused on energy efficiency because it increases Marine Corps readiness, extends operational reach, and improves the combat capability.

Q4: What is the return on investment of the Marine Corps’ operational energy initiatives?

A4: The Marine Corps calculates “Return on Investment” in terms of military capability gained (lethality, speed, the ability to extend our forces deep into enemy territory), not dollars or gallons of gas saved.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES:

<http://www.hqmc.marines.mil/e2o/>

POINT OF CONTACT:

Capt Philip Kulczewski, OUSMCC, Media Officer, 703-692-4309, philip.kulczewski@usmc.mil

TRANSGENDER POLICY

QUOTE

“We have transgender soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines — real, patriotic Americans — who I know are being hurt by an outdated, confusing, inconsistent approach that’s contrary to our value of service and individual merit. The Defense Department’s current regulations regarding transgender service members are outdated and are causing uncertainty that distracts commanders from our core missions.”
– SECDEF Ashton Carter

BACKGROUND

On 13 July, SECDEF announced that he’d formed a working group to examine the current policy banning transgender service in the military.

TALKING POINTS

TP1. DoD will create a working group to study over the next six months the policy and readiness implications of welcoming transgender persons to serve openly

TP2. The working group will start with the presumption that transgender persons can serve openly without adverse impact on military effectiveness and readiness, unless and except where objective, practical impediments are identified.

TP3. By SecDef direction, decision authority in all administrative discharges for those diagnosed with gender dysphoria or who identify themselves as transgender be elevated to Under Secretary Carson, who will make determinations on all potential separations.

TP4. The purpose of the working group is to address the many questions of “how will you handle xxxx if transgender people are allowed to serve openly.”

INTERVIEW REQUESTS

Per OSD guidance, the recommendation is to accommodate transgender service member interviews on installation in uniform if requested. However, the ultimate decision is up to the service member’s command.

1. The service member must only speak to personal experience and not appear to be speaking for DoD policy.
2. PA staff must educate SM that the discharge policy has not changed, but decision authority in all administrative discharges was elevated from the services to Under Secretary Carson.
3. SM can give statement on personal reaction to the SecDef’s transgender announcement, but must refer questions on future policy and specifics of what the working group will study to DoD.

POINTS OF CONTACT

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TRANSITION ASSISTANCE

BACKGROUND

Transformation of the Marine Corps Transition Readiness Program has emerged from a one-time training event into a self-guided approach that is delivered throughout a Marine's time of service. Our revised approach allows each Marine to select his or her own pathway (employment, education or entrepreneur) in order to receive transition information and education that is in line with that Marine's future goals and objectives.

TALKING POINTS

TP1. Personal Readiness Seminar (PRS) is the newest four hour mandatory training on personal and professional development programs and services, as well as an introductory class on finance topics. PRS highlights the online portal known as eBenefits that provides access to all Veterans Affairs benefits. Additionally, PRS offers career and educational resources, as well as financial topics such as banking and financial services, savings and investments, living expenses, understanding debt, and service members' rights.

TP2. The Marine for Life Cycle approach has been incorporated to allow transitioning Marines to meet Career Readiness Standards well in advance of TRS. Marines will gain insight into who they are as individuals, make life decisions, and develop holistic action plans to bridge the gap between where they are as a Marine and where they want to transition in the civilian sector.

TP3. The Marine for Life Cycle is the embodiment of our ethos: "Once a Marine, Always a Marine". This philosophy, along with the nationwide network of Marine for Life representatives, is vital to this effort in reach-back and outreach support. Beginning with the recruiting process and extending into Veteran Marine status, every transitioning Marine will be able to connect to opportunities and resources to focus on readiness.

TP4. The Fiscal Year 2014 total attendance at Transition Readiness Seminar (TRS) was 30,762 Marines. TRS is completely aligned with the multiagency and congressionally approved Transition GPS (Goals Plans Success) approach to transition developed by an interagency task force and overseen by the Department of Defense Transition to Veterans Program Office.

TP5. A standardized Spouses Transition and Readiness Seminar (STARS) is a new strategy created to orient spouses to the transition process and has become an additional resource for spouses. STARS is administered as part of the Family Member Employment Assistance Program (FMEAP).

WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

Marine and Family Programs: www.manpower.usmc.mil/familyprograms

Marine for Life: www.marineforlife.org

POINT OF CONTACT

Ms. Heather J. Hagan, Marine and Family Programs Division Headquarters PAO, 703-784-9521, heather.hagan@usmc-mccs.org

VICTIMS' LEGAL COUNSEL ORGANIZATION (VLCO)

Background

On 14 August 2013, the Secretary of Defense directed that each Service implement a victim legal advocacy program to provide legal advice and representation to victims of sexual assault. He directed that each Service establish initial operating capability not later than 1 November 2013 and fully establish victim legal advocacy services by 1 January 2014. The Marine Corps Victims' Legal Counsel Organization (VLCO) was established on 1 November 2013 as announced by MARADMIN 583/13. On 10 February 2014, the Marine Corps Manual for Legal Administration (LEGADMINMAN), MCO P5800.16A, was published with a new Chapter 6 describing the organization, roles, and responsibilities of VLCO. VLCO legal services are provided under the statutory authority of 10 U.S.C. § 1044e, *Special Victims' Counsel for victims of sex-related offenses*. Today VLCO has four regional VLCO offices aligned with each of the four Legal Services Support Sections (LSSS) at Camp Pendleton, Camp Lejeune, MCB Quantico, and Camp Butler, Okinawa. Additional VLCO offices are located at MCRD Parris Island, MCAS Cherry Point, MCAGCC 29 Palms, MCAS Miramar, and MCB Kaneohe Bay.

Talking Points

TP1. VLCO provides legal advice, counseling, and representation to military service members and their dependents who are victims of any crime under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), to include sexual assault, domestic violence, hazing, and other UCMJ offenses.

TP2. Victims of sexual assault "shall be informed of the availability of assistance" offered by Victims' Legal Counsel (VLC) as soon as they seek assistance from a Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), Victim Advocate, a military criminal investigator, victim/witness liaison, or a trial counsel, per 10 U.S.C. § 1565b. Once informed of the availability of VLC, it is the victim's choice whether to use the services available from VLCO.

TP3. VLC are judge advocates who are highly qualified attorneys with military justice backgrounds that have completed specialized training and been certified to serve as VLC by the Judge Advocate General of the Navy.

TP4. Communications between victims and VLC are confidential.

TP5. VLC solely represent the interests of victims, even where those interests may be different than the Government's interest in prosecuting the accused in the case. VLCO is an autonomous organization with a chain-of-command that is functionally independent of convening authorities, staff judge advocates, LSSS OICs, trial counsel, and defense counsel. VLC are under the supervision of, and report to, the OIC, VLCO, who reports directly to the SJA to CMC.

TP6. VLC ensure that victims who seek their assistance are fully informed of their rights in the investigative, judicial, and administrative processes. When detailed, VLC zealously represent and assert their clients' rights throughout the military justice process. Pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1044e, the relationship between a detailed VLC and victim shall be the relationship between an attorney and client.

TP7. VLCO services supplement, not replace, other existing victim support services, including assistance provided by SAPR and FAP Victim Advocates, SARCs, and VWAP.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

[http://www.hqmc.marines.mil/sja/Branches/VictimLegalCounselOrganization\(VLCO\).aspx](http://www.hqmc.marines.mil/sja/Branches/VictimLegalCounselOrganization(VLCO).aspx)

POINT OF CONTACT

Major J.C. Olson, USMC, Deputy OIC, VLCO, jahn.olson@usmc.mil

VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

BACKGROUND

The mission of the Voting Assistance Program is to ensure those military personnel, their eligible family members, civilian federal employees, and those who are eligible to vote under the laws and procedures of their State of voting residence are afforded every opportunity to vote. The right to vote is one of the most important civil liberties preserving our democratic system and protecting the freedoms we enjoy.

TALKING POINTS

TP1. All Marines, Civilian Marines, and their family members are encouraged to exercise the right to vote.

TP2. The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) FY2010 (H.R. 2647, Pub.L. 111-84, 123 Stat. 2190) implemented the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act (or MOVE Act). One of the requirements of that Act is that military installations are required to have Installation Voting Assistance (IVA) Offices.

TP3. In Fiscal Year 2011, the Marine Corps in concurrence with the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) Office directed the establishment of IVA Offices to be a part of in-processing for pre- and post-deployment at every installation. Significant outreach efforts have been made by Marine and Family Programs Division, Headquarters to make voting even easier for citizens and increase awareness. Marines and families can register to vote at www.fvap.gov or can mail their ballot from any Fleet Post Office, Diplomatic Post Office, American Embassy, or Consulate. Voters should contact the Unit Voting Assistance Officer for assistance.

TP4. Unit and Installation Voting Assistance Programs have trained personnel ready to assist service members, family members, and Civilian Marines with regards to Voter Registration and Absentee Voting.

RESOURCES/WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Website: www.usmc-mccs.org
- To register and vote in your home state, visit <http://www.fvap.gov/>

POINT OF CONTACT

- Ms. Heather J. Hagan, Marine and Family Programs Division PAO, 703-784-9521, heather.hagan@usmc-mccs.org

WOUNDED WARRIOR REGIMENT

TALKING POINTS

TP1. The Wounded Warrior Regiment is an enduring presence that will ensure our wounded, ill, and injured Marines will always receive comprehensive non-medical recovery care whether in time of peace or war. Having established a dedicated Warrior Care program, we have developed a capability that is beneficial and necessary to the Marine Corps taking care of its own.

TP2. Founded in 2007, the Wounded Warrior Regiment (WWR) is the official U.S. Marine Corps command charged with providing leadership and facilitating the integration of non-medical and medical care to combat and non-combat Wounded, Ill, and Injured (WII) Marines, sailors attached to Marine units, and their family members in order to maximize their recovery as they return to duty or transition to civilian life.

TP3. The WWR's headquarters element, located in Quantico, Va., commands the operations of two Wounded Warrior Battalions (WWBn) located at Camp Pendleton, Calif., and Camp Lejeune, N.C., as well as multiple detachments around the globe.

TP4. The Marine Corps takes care of its own and the WWR is our Corps' testament to "Keeping Faith" with our WII Marines.

TP5. In order to set the best climate for recovery, WWR focuses on supporting and strengthening the mind, body, spirit, and family of each Marine to promote balanced and total healing that enhances the recovery process.

TP6. Through the WWR, the Marine Corps provides life-time support to wounded, ill, and injured Marines and their families, and continues to support Marines once they become veterans through regular outreach calls from the Sergeant Merlin German Wounded Warrior Call Center and face-to-face support from District Injured Support Coordinators. Through the outreach calls and face-to-face support, the regiment is able to support veterans by conducting needs assessments, connecting them to resources, and aiding them in achieving their long term recovery goals.

TP7. The Sgt. Merlin German Wounded Warrior Call Center (WWCC) makes outreach calls to offer assistance on a wide variety of issues and receives calls on a 24/7 basis, including weekends and holidays. Assistance is provided on matters, such as service disability ratings, medical care, employment, counseling, and benevolent organizations for WII Marines and their families/caregivers. WWBn-East in Camp Lejeune, N.C. and WWBn-West in Camp Pendleton, Calif. both operate contact centers that reach out to active duty WII Marines who remain with or have returned to their parent commands.

TP8. District Injured Support Coordinators (DISCs) are an integral part of the WWR command structure, located throughout the United States, providing support to WII Active Duty and Reserve Marines as they transition to Veteran status. The DISC program provides a variety of services, including non-medical care in which the goal is to return adjusted WII Marine veterans to their communities who have the knowledge and skills to self-advocate and help other WII Marines.

TP9. DISCs are strategically placed with or near Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) locations. VISNs include medical centers, vet centers, and outpatient clinics offering primary and specialized care. This close proximity allows for direct coordination and resource sharing between the DISCs and VA health care providers.

WOUNDED WARRIOR REGIMENT (CONT'D)

TP10. The WWR Medical Section, includes the Regimental Surgeon, Mental Health Advisor, Nurse Case Manager, Psychological Health Coordinator, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Coordinator, and Licensed Clinical Consultants which provide medical subject matter expertise, advocacy, and liaison to the medical community.

TP11. Recovery Care Coordinators (RCC) are one of the first non-medical points of contact a WII Marine and their family will have with a Marine Corps support network. RCCs serve as the WII Marine's point of contact to help them define and meet their individual goals for recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration. The RCC identifies services and resources needed to help WII Marines achieve these goals.

TP12. The RCC assists in developing a Comprehensive Recovery Plan (CRP). The CRP is a Marine's roadmap that captures a WII Marine's and family's needs, translates those into concrete goals and then provides specific, actionable steps to meet those goals.

TP13. The WWR Transition cell connects wounded, ill and injured Marines with government and private employers, assists them with identifying education and job training resources, as well as providing interview, resume, and job application support.

TP14. The Warrior Athlete Reconditioning Program (WAR-P) provides activities and opportunities for WII Marines to train as athletes, while increasing their strength so they can continue with military service or develop healthy habits for life outside the service.

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