

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SEAPOWER SUBCOMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF

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BEFORE THE

SEAPOWER SUBCOMMITTEE

OF THE

SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

ON

SEABASING AND RESETTING THE FORCE

APRIL 19, 2005

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Mr. Chairman, Senator Kennedy, distinguished members of the Sub-Committee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you to discuss Seabasing and Resetting the Force. For the committee's specific concern relative to Seabasing, remarks today will focus on those Marine Corps and Navy capabilities that are most urgently needed to realize the potential of Seabasing as a strategic concept and the separate but related needs to reset our heavily committed and hard-used forces.

We are a Nation at war. Our responsibility is both the present and the future and we are obligated to protect our homeland from the physical, economic and psychological threats that were cast upon our nation's threshold in the opening days of this new century. We must defeat terrorism and other threats to our way of life at their points of origin, rather than react to them at their destinations, the cities and monuments of our homeland. This country must retain the capability to project power and influence to remote places where access may be denied.

For over two centuries your Marines have demonstrated that they are the expeditionary force in readiness – *Most Ready When the Nation is Least Ready*. Scalable, flexible and adaptable for peacetime crises and always innovative for future challenges, your Corps' number one priority is fighting and winning battles. On behalf of all Marines, we thank the Committee for your continued support and commitment to the readiness of your Marine Corps. Your support has made us more effective in the current fight and will continue to assist us as we reset, reconstitute and modernize our capabilities for operations in uncertain and often chaotic future environments.

Concepts to Capabilities

While the entire Marine Corps is engaged in supporting the Global War on Terror, we also have a responsibility to prepare for future conflicts and contingencies. The Defense Department's Strategic Planning Guidance directs balanced capabilities for controlling four principal challenges: Traditional, Irregular, Catastrophic, and Disruptive. Our challenge is to determine the right balance of those capabilities that the Marine Corps must provide to meet challenges across the operational spectrum.

Naval Power 21 is the Department of the Navy's vision that enhances Navy and Marine Corps capabilities today and tomorrow. This vision serves as the way ahead for naval programs and operations. It incorporates the Navy's *Sea Power 21* and *21st*

Century Marine Corps frameworks as a foundation to ensure naval forces control the seas, assure access, and project joint power beyond the sea to influence events and advance American interests across the range of military operations.

America's ability to use international seas and waterways, as both maneuver space and an operating base unconstrained by foreign veto, allows our naval forces to project combat power into the littoral regions, which contain more than half the world's population and more than 75 percent of its major urban areas. Highly mobile and ready for combat, our forward-deployed expeditionary forces are critical instruments of U.S. diplomacy and central components of joint military force packages designed to quickly contain a crisis or defeat an emerging threat.

Reassuring our friends while denying our enemy sanctuary during hostilities, the Navy and Marine Corps Team offers unmatched amphibious forcible-entry capabilities and can provide a persistent combat capability from their mobile sea base, thus reducing the U.S. logistical "footprint" ashore. By exploiting our nation's premier asymmetric advantage—command of the sea—the Navy and Marine Corps can loiter over the horizon and project, protect, and sustain integrated joint warfighting capabilities, provide additional options for the President, and ensure operational independence for Combatant Commanders across the full spectrum of warfare.

Seabasing. There are four Naval Capability Pillars that enable Seabasing to be the cornerstone of naval transformation. **Seabasing** is contingent on sufficient amphibious ships and MPF(F) vessels to form the Sea Base. It relies upon robust **Sea Shield** capabilities that neutralize current and future threats to the Sea Base and the forces that it supports. It exploits integrated, Navy and Marine **Sea Strike** capabilities. It depends upon **FORCEnet** capabilities to tie the various elements together and into the Joint Force. Future Sea Bases will provide a dynamic, mobile, networked platform from which naval and special operations forces can operate at will in relative safety from land based observation and fires. The Sea Base will reduce dependence on vulnerable facilities ashore while reducing footprint.

Expeditionary Maneuver Warfare (EMW) is the Marine Corps capstone concept that serves as a link between today's institutional capabilities and our family of Operating, Functional and Enabling concepts. Those concepts include Operational

Maneuver From the Sea (OMFTS), Ship to Objective Maneuver (STOM), and Sustained Operations Ashore (SOA). OMFTS links naval and maneuver warfare, doctrine, and technological advances to rapidly identify and exploit enemy weaknesses across the section of conflict. STOM applies maneuver warfare concepts to the littoral battle space, envisioning seamless maneuver from over the horizon directly to the objectives deep inland. SOA envisions the MAGTF as a general purpose Operation Maneuver Element executing a series of precise, focused combat actions. OMFTS and STOM compel the enemy to defend the complete length of his coastline and array his forces in depth throughout the littoral.

Distributed Operations (DO). DO is an additive capability to our EMW philosophy and body of concepts stemming from OMFTS. DO, at the strategic and operational level, enables Naval forces to establish a worldwide presence while simultaneously conducting combined and joint training with our allies in selected regions. This global posture allows Naval forces to respond rapidly to emerging crises with powerful and sustainable combined arms teams. At the tactical level, the DO can take several forms, based upon the mission, enemy dispositions, and the nature of the terrain. DO is predicated on decentralized command and control. It requires situational awareness, autonomy, and increased freedom of action at lower tactical levels, enabling subordinate commanders to compress decision cycles, seize the initiative, and exploit fleeting opportunities. Improved situational awareness, including real time and high fidelity data from dispersed teams, improves the vertical transmission of information. Shared situational awareness, the product of extensive training as well as a common operating picture, accelerates the horizontal integration and mutually supporting actions of spatially dispersed units.

Based on this richer, higher resolution intelligence picture, and guided by commander's intent, distributed forces could aggregate or remain distributed. They will be able to use simultaneous, overwhelming joint firepower against an increasingly confused and paralyzed adversary, allowing the main force access to the battle space. When pockets of adversaries are found, the distributed units could use swarming attacks to defeat them in detail. By attacking from multiple directions, distributed units will be seemingly everywhere. Using fire and maneuver with the benefits of a networked

operational picture and combined arms, commanders will present adversary leaders with a rapidly deteriorating situation. MAGTFs with this additional capability will confront the enemy with more threats, seizing the initiative, and forcing our enemies into a more defensive mindset by limiting his options.

Seabasing, EMW, and DO are the conceptual foundations of the Marine Corps of the 21st Century. They lead directly to our required capabilities, modernization efforts, and programs and ensure the Marine Corps continued success in deterring and defeating our nations foes.

Seabasing – A National Capability

The war against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan provided a harsh dose of reality for those who assumed traditional threats and the availability of friendly, convenient land bases to project airpower and land forces. In the early phases of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), two forward-deployed Marine Expeditionary Units formed Task Force 58 and projected the first major U.S. “conventional” combat units into Afghanistan – more than 350 miles from its sea base of amphibious shipping. Yet, their operations were far from traditional or conventional expectations. We believe these recent experiences such as the prohibition of the 4th Infantry Division using Turkey in the early stages of Operation Iraqi Freedom are compelling insights on how operations can be conducted in the future. As anti-access, military and political measures proliferate; even friendly nations may deny U.S. forces land basing and transit due to their own sovereign interests.

Seabasing represents a complex capability, a system-of-systems able to move at will. Seabasing, enabled by joint integrated and operational concepts, is the employment of ships and vessels with organic strike fires and defensive shields of sensors and weapons, strike and transport aircraft, communications and logistics. We will use the sea as maneuver space to create uncertainty for adversaries and protect the Joint force while receiving, staging and integrating scalable forces, at sea, that are capable of a broad range of missions. Its inherent freedom of movement, appropriate scalability, and sustainable persistent power provides full spectrum capabilities, from support of theater engagement strategies, to rapid response to natural or man made disasters, to military combat operations from raids, to swift defeat of enemies, to scale of

major combat and decisive operations. The Seabasing concept is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

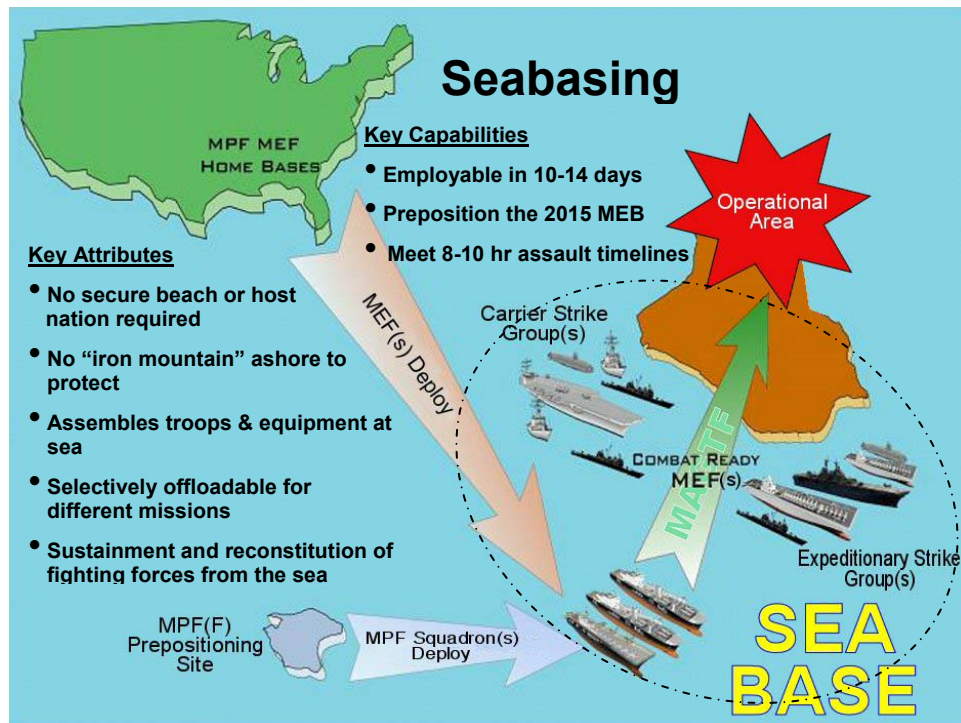


Figure 1. Seabasing Concept.

Seabasing:

(1) Provides Combatant Commanders with the positional advantage needed for the National Security and National Military Strategies. It provides the most efficient and effective means to influence or control littoral regions, facilitating rapid deployment and immediate employment, often deep inland. Seabasing provides the Combatant Commanders a capability that is optimized for use in the very areas of greatest concern and already deployed well forward even before unambiguous indications of crises.

(2) Provides Combatant Commanders the means, in coordination with the brokers of other elements of national power, to concentrate capabilities at critical times and at decisive locations of our choosing with a degree of surprise.

(3) Gives the Combatant Commanders the ability to position significant forces and capabilities within the secure environment provided by the protective shields of U.S. Navy and Air Forces in a mobile base that enhances mission security.

(4) Reduces dependence on foreign sovereign ports, airfields and host nation support. Recent operations in Afghanistan and Iraq highlight the difficulties of denied

transit of friendly nations, difficult domestic conditions for nations that allowed limited transit, and the vulnerability of Kuwait's sea and air ports to a variety of threats.

(5) Provides a strategic hedge against sovereignty concerns that can either impede or deny altogether U.S. access to critical regions. The ability to conduct either engagement activities or military and other operations from secure bases in international waters can reassure allies concerned about their domestic reaction to U.S. basing on their sovereign territory.

Seabasing Operations

Seabasing remains a primary means for the U.S during the Global War on Terror (GWOT) and for future challenges with often chaotic environments requiring rapid response to peacetime and wartime crises, and follow-on stability operations.

The Committee should note that the necessary ships, vessels, watercraft and aircraft currently programmed in the FYDP, represent the key elements needed to begin implementing Seabasing. Fiscal constraints and priorities will determine how we can implement this transformational change for future challenges as we also continue what may be a long Global War on Terror.

Today's forcible entry structure is limited to that resident within the 35 amphibious ships of the Battle Force. Today's Maritime Pre-positioning Squadrons have no capability to offload in open sea conditions. Tomorrow's Seabasing force will be an integrated capability linking forward-deployed and surge-able warships with equipment, sustainment and capabilities pre-positioned in Seabasing capable MPF(F) ships capable of selective offload in sea state 3-4, as part of a networked expeditionary strike force.

Today and tomorrow, a most visible element of assurance to allies and deterrence to foes will be naval forward presence, including capabilities of Marine Expeditionary Units (Special Operations Capable) (MEU(SOC)) embarked, protected, and sustained by Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) ships. These units provide the Combatant Commanders with forward-deployed units that can conduct a variety of quick reaction, sea-based, crises-response options against traditional challenges or against irregular foes. As Seabasing capable MPF(F) ships are delivered in the future, the amphibious warships Battle Force will serve as the advance force to initiate Joint Rapid or Forcible Entry Operations, building combat power more rapidly and robustly than today's fiscally

constrained amphibious Battle Force and today's MPF, which can only disembark pre-positioned equipment and stocks on friendly shores.

The Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) is the mid-sized Marine Air Ground Task Force that provides the next level of force from the forward deployed MEU and the Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), capable of persistent major combat operations. MEBs provide supported Combatant Commanders with a scalable, war fighting capability for a wide variety of military operations. Today, it is capable of deployment and employment via amphibious shipping (normally 15- amphibious ships, including five large-deck amphibious assault ships).

The future Seabasing effort promises more efficiency in generation of MEBs for operational employment as MEBs will be able to flow direct from home bases to the forward, on-scene, Seabasing ships, while leveraging the Sea Shield force protection attributes of the Seabasing capability. As a crisis builds 1-2 forward deployed MEUs serve as the "leading edge" of the MEB, conducting advanced force and limited objective, initial entry/response efforts, while the remainder of the strike power of the MEB is assembled on scene as part of the MPF(F) Seabasing echelon. This will enable MEB-sized Joint Rapid or Forcible Entry Operations in 10-14 days, instead of a month or we can deliver twice as much capability in the same time as required for a MEB today.

The current force-sizing construct requires the capability to respond to two (2) swiftly defeat the efforts (SDTE)– each of which could require 15 amphibious ships. One of these crises may become a Decisively defeat Campaign, bringing the most powerful force to bear, the Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), for highly capable, lethal mobile and sustained operations which today would require 28-30 operational, available amphibious ships. Today's 35 Battle Force amphibious warships can surge the required 28-30 operationally available warships and also provide the peacetime rotation load for ESG/MEU(SOC) presence in up to three regions.

We have demonstrated capabilities to surge from MEU-sized forces to MEBs (which can be the MEF forward element) and then to the MEF using additional amphibious ships, adding MPF shipping from other theatres to offload mission required equipment at a secure port. This was most recently done in Operation Iraqi Freedom where the Marine Corps was able to prepare, offload, and assemble two (2) MPF

Squadrons worth of equipment from 11 ships for employment with Marines of the MEF flown in by strategic airlift in less than 16-days. In the future, Seabasing enables us to conduct this operation without being subject to sovereignty challenges, through exploitation of the two (2) planned MPF(F) squadrons in conjunction with forward deployed amphibious shipping, staging the forces at sea in 10-14 days.

Seabasing Battle Force and Maritime Prepositioning Force Structure.

Currently the Department of the Navy has 35 Large Amphibious Ships, and 3 Squadrons of older, Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF) Ships. Current MPF ships do not have the capability for Seabasing. In the case of the current MPF ships, they are built to commercial survivability standards, manned by civilian mariners, and are not capable of rapid, large scale off-load at sea (due to their dense-pack loading), especially in higher sea state conditions. Current MPF operations normally require a secure port and airfield from which arrival/assembly operations are conducted to “marry” equipment up with strategic airlifted troops.

The 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) envisioned an amphibious force structure of 36 warships: 12-large deck aviation ships (LHA/LHD), 12-LPD-17s, and 12-LSD-41/49 class ships. These ships would enable either 3.0 MEU rotational forward presence, or in wartime provide a 2.5 MEB (assault echelon) forcible entry capability (fiscally constrained from a requirement of 3.0 MEB). The 12-ship LPD-17 class was needed to provide the lift capacity for the 2.5 MEB constrained requirement. The current mix and inventory of 35 active Battle Force amphibious ships provides slightly more than a 2.0 MEB lift - forcible entry capability. Recent decisions have reduced the current LPD-17 program to nine (9) ships, putting increased risk/pressure on the need for ensuring the right quantities and quality of warships and MPF ships for future challenges.

Enabling Seabasing Capabilities

Elements of Seabasing have been under development for some time. Expeditionary warships, MPF(F) ships, high speed surface connectors, vertical air lift connectors, sea based fires, and ground based fires are the major enablers to Seabasing as described below.

Seabasing – the Warships

LPD-17. The USS SAN ANTONIO (LPD-17) Class of amphibious transport dock ships was designed and planned to replace 61 legacy amphibious assault ships: This fine class of ships is optimized for operational flexibility to meet Marine Air Ground Task Force requirements to project strike (fire and maneuver) forces from the sea deep into littoral land objectives. With its significantly enhanced survivability, habitability, and functionality, it represents a critical element of Seabasing with a spacious well deck for deployment of LCAC's and Expeditionary Fighting Vehicles (EFV) and an enhanced flight deck and maintenance facility for employment of MV-22, medium assault tiltrotors and CH-53E/X heavy lift helicopters. Survivability upgrades protect against mines, missiles and surface attack makes it a highly capable platform for the forward deployed ESG/MEU and larger forcible entry operations. With the LHA(R) ship design emphasis on aviation transport and strike fires, the well decks of the LPD-17 and existing LSD-41/49 class have even more importance to the rapid surface movement of Expeditionary Fighting Vehicles deep inland and LCAC transport of heavy or bulky ground equipment and sustainment.

The Fiscal Year 2006 Budget includes \$1.3B to fully fund the construction of the eighth ship of the class of fighting amphibs. The lead ship of the class the USS SAN ANTONIO is approximately 93 percent complete with delivery scheduled for the summer of 2005. In addition to the lead ship, four follow-on ships are under construction. NEW ORLEANS (LPD-18) was christened on November 20, 2004; MESA VERDE (LPD-19) was christened January 25, 2005; construction continues on GREEN BAY (LPD-20) and NEW YORK (LPD-21). Advanced Procurement contracts for SAN DIEGO (LPD-22) and ANCHORAGE (LPD-23) have been awarded for long-lead time material for these ships. The 8th LPD-17, ARLINGTON (LPD-24), is programmed for funding in the Fiscal Year 2006 budget. The ninth ship, SOMERSET (LPD-25) is planned for Fiscal Year 2007. The LPD-17 class of warships is critical for the Marine Corps' amphibious lift requirement. LPD-17 ships are used for rapid, early or forcible entry lift in major combat operations and also provides the peacetime rotation basis for up to three ESG/MEU(SOC) regionally forward deployed.

LHD-8. The last of eight LHD class warships capitalizes on the proven design of the LHD 1 class, USS MAKIN ISLAND (LHD 8) will deliver transformational

capabilities when it enters the fleet in 2007. Combining design alterations from LHD 5 onward with new gas turbine propulsion, a revolutionary electric drive, and an enhanced combat systems suite, including Cooperative Engagement Capability (CEC), MAKIN ISLAND is like no other expeditionary warship in the world. LHD 8 serves as the basis for LHA(R) hull, mechanical, and electrical systems, reducing the technology risk normally found in a new class of ships.

LHA(R). With \$150M Advanced Procurement funding provided by Congress in Fiscal Year 2005 and an additional \$150M requested in Fiscal Year 2006, the first of four LHA(R) ships is programmed in Fiscal Year 2007. LHA(R), which will replace the aging LHA class ships, is a modified LHD 1 Class design (without well decks) with enhanced aviation capabilities. LHA(R) is designed to accommodate future Marine Corps aircraft, with emphasis on the MV-22, CH-53E/X and the Short Take Off, Vertical Landing (STOVL) JSF Joint Strike Fighter. Distributed Operations conducted from Sea Basing and expeditionary sites ashore, will leverage the increased strike, and support characteristics of these ships with ESGs capable of independent operations, or in conjunction with Carrier Strike groups (CSGs) for large scale operations when land bases are not available for contingencies.

The LHA(R) will have nearly three times the fuel capacity of existing LHDs for sustained operations. It will be capable of operational and maintenance support for either 23 JSF or 28 MV-22 aircraft, or a combination of fixed, rotary wing, and tiltrotor aircraft. MPF(F) capabilities provide the vehicle square and well deck spaces not available in the LHA(R) class as part of the future Seabasing force. The LHA(R) will support Sea Strike operations in addition to supporting fire and maneuver in support of the MAGTF.

Seabasing – Maritime Prepositioning Force (Future) (MPF(F)).

MPF(F) will allow us to better exploit the sea to conduct reception, staging integration and projection of forces for joint operations, especially in an access denied environment. MPF (F) will provide four capabilities: (1) at-sea arrival and assembly (2) direct support of the assault echelon of the amphibious task force; (3) long-term, sea-based sustainment; and (4) at-sea reconstitution and redeployment.

The MPF(F) will be a key enabler for Seabasing and future Joint Forcible Entry Operations. During the early phases of a joint campaign, these ships will provide floating

bases to enable the rapid reinforcement of forward presence ESG/MEU forces with the rapid scaling up to MEB or MEF-sized forces and follow on elements of the joint force. The MPF(F) and expeditionary warships operating together at sea will provide landing platforms for MAGTFs, Special Operations Forces, and follow-on Army forces.

MPF(F) is part of an integrated Seabasing concept. We will integrate these ships functionally with the forward deployed amphibious warships in the Battle Force to leverage their tremendous capability to reconstitute, re-supply, and rapidly reinforce assault waves launched from the forward deployed, more survivable assault ships. These two distinct, yet linked, components of the Sea Base will enable the Joint force to “surge” Marines and follow on joint forces through the Sea Base for more rapid build up of joint capabilities, increasing combat tempo and responsiveness to Combatant Commanders’ needs.

The concept is for at least two squadrons of MPF(F) ships, a total of 14-20 ships. Navy and Army Joint High Speed Vessels will enable rapid movement within the sea base and ashore where conditions permit. The mix of Maritime Prepositioning Force (Future) ships is being determined, and will be capable of surface and air transport of Marine combat units, prepositioning critical equipment, and 20 days of supplies for Marine Expeditionary Brigades. Seabasing will provide increased protection and combat capability as well as rapid deployment and employment of forces compared to our current capabilities.

In addition to \$28M of National Defense Sealift RDT&E funds in the Fiscal Year 2005 budget, the Fiscal Year 2006 Budget request includes \$66M of RDT&E funds to support technology development such as selective offload in MPF(F). The first MPF(F) ship is planned for Fiscal Year 2009 with advanced procurement award scheduled in Fiscal Year 2008.

Seabasing - Surface Connectors

Joint High Speed Vessel (JHSV). The Joint High Speed Vessel will provide intra-theater, interoperable vessels capable of movements between dispersed operational platforms for inter-modal transfer of troops, combat equipment and sustainment, as well as high-speed dashes to and from shore penetration points and austere ports. Army and Navy intra-theater high-speed vessel programs were recently merged under a Naval Sea

Systems Command program office in order to reduce cost yet leverage current commercial technologies, and ensure interoperability of vessels with the Joint Sea Base by acquisition of U.S. built vessels.

The foreign leased high-speed vessels; Swift and WestPac Express enabled the III Marine Expeditionary Force to expand training and engagement in the western Pacific while decreasing transit time. They were also operationally used in support of tsunami relief operations in the Indian Ocean. The Swift also provides a research and development test bed and is able to serve in support of contingency response requirements.

Contract awards for the first Army-funded JHSV is expected in Fiscal Year 2008 with delivery in 2010. The first Navy-funded JHSV is programmed for Fiscal Year 2009. With currently three (3) JHSVs in Navy plans, the Department continues joint exercises, experiments, and warfighting assessments to refine its requirements.

Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) Service Life Extension Program (SLEP). LCACs were the first high-speed surface connector for expeditionary forces. Capable of high-speed dashes up to 50 nautical miles from shore, they carry heavy equipment, and can access a wider array of littoral beaches than previous displacement landing craft.

The LCAC SLEP program provides improvements in the navigation, communication, and hulls for the aging fleet of LCACs, while also providing them a Sea State 3 heavy lift capability, which is required performance for both MPF(F) and amphibious ships operating in the Seabasing environment.

LCACs will remain a critical component of surface lift for the Marine Corps. Upgrades provided by the LCAC SLEP will ensure its continued relevance, readiness of our expeditionary forces, and interoperable capabilities within and from the Joint Sea Base. The LCAC (SLEP) fleet will begin to reach the end of its service life in 2014. The follow-on, LCAC(X) program will carry significantly larger loads, payload weight, have extended ranges, and reduce the number of trips required for the force to and from the shore from Seabasing ships.

The Department has requested \$14M in R&D funding for the LCAC(X) program in Fiscal Year 2006, and programmed to start procurement in Fiscal Year 2010. The Department has programmed \$111M for the LCAC SLEP program for six (6) LCACs in

the Fiscal Year 2006 Budget.

Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle (EFV). The EFV is the Marine Corps' highest ground combat acquisition priority, with low rate initial production scheduled to begin in FY 2007. With Initial Operational Capability in Fiscal Year 2010, the EFV will replace our Assault Amphibious Vehicle (AAV) –7, which is undergoing a rebuild program to prevent gaps in capability. EFVs will carry the surface assault echelon's of forcible entry forces, at sea-speeds four times that of the AAV-7, as part of multi-dimensional attacks through littoral penetration points to join deep inland with forces vertically lifted by MV-22 and CH-53E/X aircraft. On reaching the shore from their over-the-horizon launch point, EFV will have the speed to maneuver with the M1A1 tanks and Light Armored Vehicles (LAVs) and the sustainment to continue the assault deep inland for link up with vertical assault forces, or independent maneuver. They will provide Marines a modern armored NBC-protected combat vehicle with a truly impressive 30 mm cannon to provide close support to dismounted troops and accurate fire on the move capability.

The EFV gives Marine forces a unique ability to use the seas, rivers, swamps and marshlands for operational and tactical maneuver, a capability recently demonstrated by the aging AAV7A-1 family in OIF when maneuver forces crossed Iraqi rivers when bridgeheads were choked or not existent.

Seabasing – Vertical Lift Aircraft Connectors.

The medium lift **MV-22 program** is the centerpiece of aviation lift connectors for the Seabasing force. The MV-22 is designed to replace the aging CH-46E and CH-53D helicopters. Optimized for speed, endurance and survivability to rapidly deploy forces from bases deep at sea to objectives deep inland. The MV-22 will carry 24 combat loaded Marines, can externally lift the Lightweight 155mm Howitzer, and will internally lift the Expeditionary Fire Support System (EFSS) 120 mm mortar, and the Internally Transportable Vehicle (ITV).

The Fiscal Year 2006 Budget request includes \$1.3B for nine (9) MV-22's, trainer modifications and retrofits; \$206.4M is also included for continued development, testing and evaluation.

The CH-53E/X **Heavy Lift Replacement (HLR)** program will replace our aging fleet of CH-53E Super Stallion helicopters for the Marine Corps' vertical heavy lift

requirement. CH-53E helicopters have already begun retirements due to reaching service life margins, with large block retirements expected after Fiscal Year 2012.

The CH-53X/HLR is a derivative design of the existing CH-53E, remaining within the same shipboard footprint, providing greater lift, reliability, survivability, maintainability, and cost of ownership improvements over the legacy CH-53E. It will have shipboard compatibility with all current and planned amphibious ships, as well as MPF(F), and be able to remain at sea as part of the Seabasing force for extended periods. The CH-53E and CH-53X/HLR will be critical to operations in anti-access, area-denial environments, enabling force application and focused logistics from far offshore to deep inland sites. The HLR will transport 27,000 pounds to distances of 110 nautical miles with combat payloads to include the LAV or two-armored High Mobility Multi Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV). To sustain the force, the HLR will be the critical logistics air connector for sea-based power projection operations.

The Fiscal Year 2006 Budget requests \$272 M in RDT&E funds for the System Development and Demonstration phase of the CH-53X/HLR program.

Seabasing – Fires

The complementary capabilities of surface- and air-delivered fires continue to be highlighted in ongoing combat operations in Operation ENDURING FREEDOM and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. Precision and volume fires are critical to the lethality and survivability of Marine, Army and Special Operations forces. Capitalizing on lessons learned, and the imperative of modernization necessary for select legacy systems, the Corps is improving our short and long-range organic fires and our target acquisition sensor platforms in support of Expeditionary Maneuver Warfare, and especially for Distributed Operations forces.

Vertical Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (VUAV). VUAV performance must achieve the speed, range, payload, survivability, and reliability, interoperability with command and control, as well as shipboard compatibility with Joint Rapid or Forcible Entry Operations as well as existing and future Seabasing ships. We have begun evaluating the Coast Guard's Eagle Eye UAV, which is a high-speed tiltrotor craft developed as part of its Deepwater Program. The VUAV is expected to provide a long-

range sensor platform able to conduct both focused and wide ISR with time-critical targeting information for Seabased fires as well as maneuver fires deep inland.

The Marine Corps requires a replacement of its almost 20-year old Pioneer UAV system, which had flown over 6,950 hours in support of OIF. Tactical UAVs are clearly critical for Marine and other forces. The Fiscal Year 2006 Budget requests \$9.2 M to evaluate the Eagle Eye program.

STOVL-JSF and Strike Aircraft Upgrades. The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, Short Take Off Vertical Landing (JSF STOVL) aircraft will enhance our ability to conduct precision strikes and provide close support to our Marines on the ground. JSF combines the basing flexibility of the AV-8B with the multi-role capabilities, speed, and maneuverability of the F/A-18 for both the air-to-ground and air-to-air requirements of the MAGTF. The aircraft has a very low radar cross-section and provide superior capabilities over our legacy aircraft in areas of survivability, lethality, and supportability. The STOVL version of JSF is being developed specifically for the Marines and seven Allied partners. Use of the STOVL variant doubles the available Seabasing platforms for basing of strike aircraft, enabling dispersal of our critical strike aircraft across multiple platforms for survivability.

The JSF program is due to undergo a critical design review in November of this year, and if approved for Low Rate Initial Production, IOC is planned to occur in 2012. As the Marine Corps chose to leap over the evolutionary improvements of the F-18E/F programs for its aging F-18A/C/D and AV-8B inventory, it is critical to the MAGTF's combined arms and Seabasing future to begin fielding the STOVL JSF within the FYDP. The Fiscal Year 2006 Budget request contains \$2.4 B for continuation of System Development and Demonstration on the JSF.

DD(X) Land Attack Destroyer. Designed to operate as part of Expeditionary Strike Groups, the DD(X) will provide long range, time-critical, all-weather, precise and high volume fires to the Seabasing force and follow on joint forces. Its improved stealth enhances its survivability.

The DD(X)s 155 millimeter Advanced Gun System (2 per ship) will provide increased rate of fire, range and lethality over currently available naval guns through its associated Long Range Land Attack Projectile (LRLAP). DD(X) will provide precision

and high volume fires at ranges up to 100 nautical miles in support of Seabasing inserted forces. In addition to the long-range cannon, DD(X) can employ Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles from the ship's 60 tubes of the Peripheral Vertical Launch Systems. The DD(X) will be able to conduct multiple round, simultaneous impact missions, when combined with its larger shell casing will yield significantly improved lethality for soft and hard targets. It will be integrated into the Joint command and control network, through the Naval Fire Control System at Sea, and Advanced Field Artillery Tactical Data System (fielded with Marines and Army forces) ashore.

Each ship will be designed to carry 600 long-range 155 mm munitions plus 70 long-range land attack projectiles to provide high volume support. Planned logistics systems to support the DD(X) in legacy and future Combat Logistic Force ships of the Seabasing Force will have unique packaging and handling mechanisms to enable rapid re-supply missions for the DD(X) to quickly reconstitute its magazines, allowing the ship to remain engaged in the fight. A range of eight (8) to twelve (12) DD(X) ships would support forcible entry operations.

The Fiscal Year 2006 Budget request includes \$1.1B in RDT&E for continued technology development and \$716M in SCN advance procurement funds for the first and second DD(X). The FYDP includes full funding for the first DD(X) in Fiscal Year 2007 and construction of one ship per year in each follow on year.

Organic Ground Combat Fires.

The **M777A1 Joint Lightweight Howitzer (LW-155)** will be the primary indirect fire artillery weapon of the Marine Corps. A joint program, it leverages commonality of ammunition with the majority of the war reserve stockpile, combined with an extensive family of precision and lethal munitions, capable of firing both close and deep fires in support of maneuver. Reductions in weight through use of advanced materials make it transportable from the Seabasing force by all medium and heavy lift aircraft.

The **Expeditionary Fire Support System (EFSS)** will provide the vertical assault element of MAGTFs with immediately responsive, lethal, organic indirect fires at ranges beyond current infantry battalion mortars. The lighter weight, rapid fire, and small profile rifled mortar, will increase the ability of sea based forces to load more

capabilities than the present truck-intensive artillery batteries. The Marine Corps is procuring ITV along with the EFSS to give it ground mobility. The EFSS and the ITV will be internally transportable by the CH-53E, MV-22, and CH-53X/HLR, and leverage their high speeds in support of deep or distributed operations forces.

The Joint **High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS)** will fulfill a critical gap in organic Marine Corps ground based fire support, providing 24-hour, all weather, precision and high volume missile fires. HIMARS is air transportable by C-130 aircraft, and will fit on JHSV's and LCACs from Seabasing ships. It provides a highly responsive, precision ground-based means to engage time critical, sensitive targets, complementing aviation fires. As part of the balanced suite of organic ground combat, naval surface, and air-delivered fires, HIMARS augments the lightweight artillery capabilities, providing the Division and MEF commanders the ability for both precision and mass fires at depth throughout the battlefield. One active and one reserve Battalion of HIMARS is being procured, beginning in 2006.

Complementary Low Altitude Weapon System (CLAWS). CLAWS is a surface-to-air weapon systems utilizing HMMWV-mounted AMRAAM missiles. It will possess the mobility and lethality required to keep pace with supported maneuver elements, and will fill the gap in naval air defenses during extended littoral operations. Initial fielding is expected in FY-09 with FOC expected in FY-15.

Training Ranges – The Seabasing concept, will require realistic training opportunities to ensure that Marines are fully prepared to operate in and from the maritime environment. Our littoral training bases, Camp Pendleton, California and Camp Lejeune, North Carolina are absolutely critical in preparing our forward deployed ESGs/MEUs and exercising the Seabasing capability. Our ability to conduct the full-range of air-ground task force missions at these bases has been seriously eroded by a variety of encroachment issues over the years. It is imperative that we protect our current capabilities at both locations while doing our best to recapture some of their former capacities. We must also continue to invest in our major MAGTF training ranges at Twenty-nine Palms, California and Yuma, Arizona. These locations, though located some distance from the sea, permit us to more closely exercise the full capability of the air-ground task force in coordinated, live-fire exercises. Just as the Seabasing concept

lends itself to employment throughout the world, our need to retain access to the valuable training ranges owned and operated by our sister services and our allies is of primary importance to the readiness of maritime forces. The unprecedented level of cross-service utilization of the portfolio of ranges optimizes the interoperability of joint and coalition forces.

THE MARINE AIR GROUND TASK FORCE

The Individual Marine

Today's Marines, defending our way of life today on the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan, personify our ethos that - every Marine is a rifleman. The success of the Corps is today, as it always has been, built upon Marines and their warrior ethos. We create warriors who are both expeditionary and interoperable in the Joint, Coalition, and Interagency arenas as part of a Seabasing force or for expeditionary operations deep inland, capable of creating stability anywhere around the globe.

From our advertising, recruiting, training, and education programs, we develop our Marines' ability to think independently and act aggressively as a matter of routine. We create Marines that thrive in the chaotic and unpredictable situations and environments that characterize the battlefields of the future. Our combat capability is built around riflemen, who in turn form scalable, combined arms teams.

We will increase the speed, flexibility, and agility of our MAGTFs by first renewing emphasis on our greatest asset, the individual Marine, through improved education and training in foreign languages, cultural awareness, tactical intelligence and urban operations. We are equipping them to operate in the alleys of the urbanized littoral, areas they already dominate in places so recently in the headlines like Fallujah, Ramadi, and the northern Babil Province. Our 21st Century Marine will "out-learn, out-think, and out-fight" any adversary and embody an aggressive moral spirit, a refined level of adaptability and mental agility, and the flexibility necessary to confidently and successfully operate on the future battlefield. Second, we are focused on implementing Distributed Operations where we will dominate terrain with small dispersed units when appropriate, and take hold of terrain by concentrating as the situation dictates.

In keeping with our principle of equipping the Marine for the fight, we have accelerated efforts to purchase the Modular Weapon System to replace our M16A2 rifles;

to increase the density of Advanced Combat Optic Gun sights, Sniper Scopes and Thermal Weapon Sights that will enable our Marines to engage at extended ranges with precision, and to increase their operational tempo and agility, day or night. We are accelerating efforts for procurement of Common Laser Rangefinders to export targeting data to advanced GPS location devices, and hand them off to our Seabasing Fires enablers via the Target Hand-Off System for Distributed Operations capable squads and traditional fire support teams. We are making major improvements in small-unit, and MAGTF intelligence support equipment to synthesize and disseminate information from across the spectrum. At the same time we have made great strides through your support in providing individual and vehicle protective armor. One of our most significant investments is in radio systems to enable inter and intra squad communications, as well as over-the-horizon communications, Joint Tactical Radio Systems, and Satellite Communication on the Move capability.

In the coming months, we will stand up a Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning (CAOCL) which will ensure that Marines are equipped with the requisite regional, cultural, and language knowledge to allow them to operate successfully in the Joint expeditionary environment...in any region of the world...against the range of irregular, traditional, catastrophic, and disruptive threats.

End Strength. The Marine Corps greatly appreciates your recognition of our manpower needs after we had extensively reviewed and restructured some existing capabilities to meet urgent needs, and through use of our recent temporary manning strength increase to a force level of 178,000 active duty Marines. Our first priority is to increase our infantry units' manning levels and mitigate the stress on these heavily committed organizations, which have seen upwards of a 1:1 rotation ratio in the past year due to the demands of GWOT. We will also create dedicated Foreign Military Training Units (FMTUs), add to our recruiting force, and provide more support personnel for the operating forces in order to enhance our training and support to our Marines and their families.

USMC/US Special Operations Command Initiatives. Ongoing operations in support of the Global War on Terror highlight the interdependence in the battle space between Marine Corps operating forces and Special Operation Forces. The Marine

Corps' pursuit of increased irregular warfare capabilities has resulted in formation of Foreign Military Training Units to assist USSOCOM. Examples of some of our recent successes include the Republic of Georgia Train and Equip Program; providing training capability to the Afghan National Army, and Military Assistance Training Teams to the Iraqi National Army. The Commandant and Commander of SOCOM are committed to exploring new ways to leverage each others capabilities as we continue to fight irregular wars, to include use of the Joint Seabasing concept for future deployment and employment options. Equipment compatibility is a crucial ingredient in this relationship and we continue to pursue the means to train, work, and operate more fluidly in the special operations environment.

Marine Corps Force Structure Review Group (FSRG) Initiative. Prior to enactment of the Fiscal Year 2005 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), we commenced a comprehensive total force structure review to better meet the demands of the 21st Century and long-term Global War on Terror. Subsequently, we began implementing force structure realignment initiatives intended to enhance low density/high demand capabilities, and to reduce stress for critical units as part of GWOT. Since 1991 the Marine Corps has conducted multiple "lean-down, reorganize" initiatives to better prepare for tomorrow's fight. As before, the FSRG initiatives are end strength and structure neutral, requiring additional equipment, facilities, operations and maintenance resources to implement. Structure changes include the establishment of two additional infantry battalions, three light armored reconnaissance companies, three reconnaissance companies, two force reconnaissance platoons, and an additional Air-Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (ANGLICO) for the active component. Existing explosive ordnance disposal, intelligence, aviation support, civil affairs, and command and control assets will receive additional augmentation. The reserve component's structure initiatives will increase the capability of Marine Forces Reserve to respond to the Global War on Terror and includes the establishment of an intelligence support battalion, a security/anti-terrorism battalion, and two additional light armored reconnaissance companies. Civil affairs and command and control units will receive additional augmentation and some reserve units will be converted into Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) Detachments – allowing more timely access to these

Marine Reservists to support contingency operations – in order to improve the effectiveness of their contributions.

We continue to pursue sensible military to civilian conversions in order to increase the number of Marines in the operating force. The temporary end-strength increase, implementation of force structure initiatives, and military to civilian conversions are expected to help mitigate any potential negative effects this high tempo may have on individual Marines and our force's readiness.

The majority of new units created by these initiatives will achieve IOC in Fiscal Year 2006, with Full Operating Capability (FOC) by Fiscal Year 2008. MILCON and equipment procurement requirements will require funding in Fiscal Year 2005 to support IOC and FOC because military construction projects have an average lead time of two to three years, and many of the procurement items have lead times ranging from 18-24 months.

Our estimate of force structure initiatives' costs from Fiscal Years 2005-2011 totals approximately \$1.4B, of which \$408M is included in the Fiscal Year 2005 Supplemental request. The Fiscal Year 2007 and out year costs required to complete and sustain the FSRG recommendations are being addressed for inclusion in our baseline budget.

Sustaining Combat Operations and Resetting the Force

Sustaining the Current Level of Effort. Your support has ensured our near-term readiness remains strong, even while current demand on the force is high. In the past two years, we have gone from a pre-GWOT deployment rotation ratio of just over one-to-two (~6 months deployed / ~14 months home) to our current ratio of just above one-to-one (~7 months deployed / ~7 months home), primarily in our infantry battalions, rotary-wing aviation squadrons, and other high demand units. This means that many Marine units in the operating forces are either deployed or are training to relieve deployed units. Most notable amongst these factors is the consistent, sustained deployment of approximately 30 percent of our ground assets and 25 percent of our aviation assets in support of the GWOT. Those deployment rates, when considered in the context of our assumption that most of the ground equipment in theater eventually will be attrited or beyond economical repair, highlight the potential enormity of our equipment

replacement requirements. Ground and aviation assets will either be replaced through normal, albeit accelerated, procurement methods or short-term measures will be taken to mitigate loss of capabilities until anticipated modern or transformational capabilities enter the force.

The incremental operational costs of both OIF and OEF have been principally funded through supplemental appropriations based on Office of the Secretary of Defense guidance. In addition to the supplemental funding requests, the Marine Corps has reprogrammed \$400M, through either existing below threshold authority or by above threshold requests to Congress, for essential warfighting equipment in response to deployed Marines requests via our Urgent Universal Needs Statement (UUNS) process. The Marine Corps included some resetting the force requirements: \$71M for depot maintenance and \$139M in procurement of equipment and ammunition in the Fiscal Year 2004 Supplemental. That was an initial estimate of a total bill that is still being accumulated.

In the spring of 2004, the Secretary of Defense requested that the Services assess the impact of higher operating tempo and environmental factors on the total inventory of equipment employed in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Marine Corps conducted a Demand on Equipment analysis on an initial list of 94 high cost/high use items of equipment, including both ground and aviation systems. That analysis estimated \$2.2B in replacement/repair costs, which were included in the Fiscal Year 2005 Supplemental request. Additionally, the Marine Corps requested, through the Fiscal Year 2005 Supplemental, funding to replace equipment taken from our prepositioning stocks (Maritime Prepositioning Squadron and Marine Corps Prepositioning Program – Norway stocks) (\$246M), and CONUS stocks (\$400M), and to fund urgent warfighting equipment needs in the field (\$2.1B). In all instances, we assessed our ability to contract for and obligate Fiscal Year 2005 funding to expedite the delivery of this equipment. However, due to industrial base and other execution issues, a portion of our requirements must be deferred until Fiscal Year 2006 and subsequent fiscal years. At present, the Marine Corps is using the funding provided by the Fiscal Year 2005 Bridge Supplemental (\$2.1B) to finance GWOT operations and to procure urgently needed force

protection equipment, including additional vehicle armor kits and aircraft survivability equipment.

Equipment Cross-leveling. A critical aspect of the Marine Corps reconstitution/reset the force planning effort is our ongoing effort to cross-level equipment across the total force, to include equipment required in Iraq and Afghanistan, pre-positioned stocks, and home station operating/training sets. In order to ensure seamless operational support to OIF and the most cost effective strategy for force rotations, the Commandant directed that equipment necessary to prosecute OIF operations remain in theater for as long as practical. This policy has allowed the Marine Corps to focus our efforts on identifying, attaining, and delivering the best equipment possible to forces in theater. This policy also drastically reduces equipment rotation costs, thus husbanding critical financial resources for other uses.

Although having the best equipment, in the right quantities, in support of deployed units is paramount, the policy of retaining equipment in theater has led to home station equipment shortfalls. In order to fill these shortfalls to a level that will enable satisfactory pre-deployment training, we have initiated actions to cross level equipment throughout the Marine Corps, including both active and reserve components.

Rapid Acquisition Processes. The Urgent Universal Needs Statement (UUNS) process, which we initiated in 2002, is critical to ensuring our Marines are as well equipped as possible. As a truly bottom up process, it provides a way for our warfighters in the Operating Forces to identify and forward new requirements for weapons and gear for quick review and approval (usually in less than 90 days). Through the leadership of the Secretary of the Navy, and supported by the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition (ASN RDA), the Navy-Marine Corps team worked an expedited process known as “Operation Respond” for expedited review and acquisition of Marine and Navy requirements, leveraging the Department’s R&D and laboratory efforts to employ cutting edge technology where appropriate. We are also participating in the Deputy Secretary of Defense - led Joint Rapid Acquisition process, which recently approved acquisition of 122 Cougar EOD vehicles for deployed Marine Corps and Army EOD teams. Our UUNS process has enabled us to aggressively pursue the addition of armor to all of our HMMWV and MTRV trucks used outside of garrisons

within the USCENTCOM Area of Responsibility, and to quickly provide adequate body armor, improved rifle optics, counter Improvised Explosive Device equipment, night vision devices, Blue Force Tracker equipment, personal role radios (squad level communication devices), unique ammunition items, and numerous other warfighting and force protection critical items. Throughout all these processes, the Services have cooperated closely to ensure we leverage the best ideas and efforts in order to equip our warriors on the ground and in the air.

Demand on Equipment. The Global War on Terror usage rates in combat theaters are up to eight times higher than those in other locations. This increases the cost of operations and maintenance beyond what is typically budgeted. During each month of OIF, the Marine Corps incurred equipment maintenance and sustainment related costs of close to \$80M a month beyond normal budgeted levels that had to migrate from other sources. Assuming a similar operational tempo, and making adjustments for the current equipment density that is deployed in theater, the Marine Corps can expect in excess of \$50M per month of ground equipment maintenance requirements over baseline program, non-combat maintenance needs. In addition to higher usage rates, equipment is being used under extreme conditions, increasing maintenance requirements. Further, the practice of adding armor to unarmored vehicles creates significant stress on vehicle frames and power trains, and although lives have been saved and injuries prevented, it comes with detrimental costs to the materiel. To date, more than 1,800 principal end items valued at \$94.3M have been destroyed. An additional 2300 damaged end items will require depot maintenance. The stress on equipment continues.

Our legacy aircraft are performing their assigned missions and holding up well under highly increased usage rates. The venerable CH-46 troop transport helicopter has been flown in support of OIF at 230 percent of its peacetime usage rate. While utilization rates have increased, the overall trends for deployed aircraft readiness have remained fairly constant, averaging 72 percent. In order to improve our readiness rate in theater, we are creating a limited aircraft depot maintenance capability. As a result of supporting combat operations, our non-deployed units are experiencing lower readiness, currently at 69 percent and trending down, while the utilization has remained constant.

Hellfire missiles continue to be expended in support of current GWOT operations. The Fiscal Year 2005 Supplemental requested an additional \$43M to reconstitute our Hellfire inventories. This request is more urgent due to termination of the previously planned Hellfire replacement, the Joint Common Missile program. In addition to Hellfire needs, engineering teams have tested 1036 LAU-7 launchers for our F/A-18s and found 12.5 percent cracked (as of Dec 19, 2004), and 53.2 percent worn beyond limits. The current failure rate would result in non-mission capable F/A-18 aircraft in 2006. Support for the Marine Corps' Fiscal Year 2005 Supplemental funding request of \$11M for LAU-7's will provide long lead items, ensure deliveries in 2006 to maintain F/A-18 aircraft readiness.

Marine Aviation Command and Control Systems, specifically our legacy TPS-63 and TPS-59 (version 3) radar systems, have experienced heavy utilization and resultant degraded readiness due to the GWOT. There are no open production lines. Acceleration of the G/ATOR and HELRASR modern replacement programs is a part of our mid-term reset requirements.

Prepositioning Programs Reset Actions, Requirements, and Funding. OIF provided an opportunity to employ Maritime Prepositioning as it was envisioned. The offloading of eleven ships in 16 days through one port was the second largest MPF operation in history, providing most of the equipment used by Marines in OIF I. The equipment readiness on the first squadron was 98.5 percent, while the second squadron was 99.1 percent. After OIF I, and concurrent with the reorganization to "mirror image" our squadrons, we began reconstituting downloaded ships even as we continued to support ongoing operations. Equipment and supplies not used to reconstitute MPSs in Kuwait and not required by engaged forces were brought to Blount Island Command (BIC) and put in general support of MPF Maintenance Cycle 8 (MMC-8), which commenced with the reconstitution of MPSRON-1 beginning in April 2004.

MPSRON-1 completed reconstitution and its maintenance cycle in March 2005 and is ready to support the operational requirements of the Regional Combatant Commanders. The squadron's major end item maintenance readiness is 99.6 percent.

In March-April 2004, two ships from MPSRON-2 and maritime prepositioning equipment and supplies from Blount Island Command were used to support Marines still

conducting operations in Iraq. All of MPSRON-2's maritime prepositioning equipment and supplies have been downloaded. Four of its ships are in the Common-User Sealift Pool (CUSP), and one is conducting Extended Maritime Interdiction Operations (EMIO) in direct support of Commander, U.S. Pacific Command. Ships from MPSRON-2 will rotate through its maintenance cycle from June 2005 - April 2006.

MPSRON-3 was reconstituted in Kuwait from September 2003 - February 2004 and will rotate through its maintenance cycle from March 2006 - April 2007. The squadron's current major end item maintenance readiness is 98.8 percent .

Marine Corps Prepositioning Program - Norway (MCPN-N). The Marine Corps is in the process of transforming its Norway Air-Landed Marine Expeditionary Brigade (NALMEB) prepositioning program into the MCPN-N. The prepositioning objective for MCPN-N is projected to be roughly equivalent to the NALMEB prepositioning objective, while its mission is transforming from a Cold War paradigm to an emphasis on forward deploying war reserve material pre-positioned stocks in general support of all Regional Combatant Commanders.

After OIF I, MCPN-N transferred major end items to the MPF program in support of the back load of prepositioning ships during MMC-8. In support of OIF II, the Marine Corps deployed approximately five percent of MCPN-N's major end items. On 1 March 2005, the Marine Corps redistributed 25.6 percent of MCPN-N's readiness-reportable major end items to units preparing to deploy in support of the GWOT as part of our equipment cross-leveling plan. The program's current major end item maintenance readiness is 99.8 percent, and it is currently at 80.1 percent of its overall major end item's prepositioning objective. Its on-hand readiness for reportable end items will decrease to 38.2 percent when ongoing redistributions are complete.

The Marine Corps is planning the reconstitution of MPSRON-2 and MCPN-N. The only capability that will prove difficult to reconstitute in the short term is ground equipment. The foundation of our reconstitution efforts is the additional Procurement Marine Corps (PMC) funding from the Fiscal Year 2005 Supplemental. Our Fiscal Year 2005 Supplemental request contained PMC funding to procure the majority of those MPSRON-2 and MCPN-N major end item shortfalls that are executable in Fiscal Year 2005. When approved, and upon completion of fielding, the projected attainment for

major end items will be 75 percent for MPSRON-2 and 87.5 percent for MCPP-N. The Marine Corps currently projects we will require additional PMC and O&MMC dollars to complete the reconstitution of MPSRON-2 and MCPP-N in FY 2006 and future years.

Reset the force. Fighting the war, and resetting the force for the future, is the Commandant's focus. While it depends on the individual item of equipment selected, in general, our ground equipment is experiencing roughly eight times the use normally experienced during peacetime operations. The decision to replace, rather than repair, major equipment items is, in most cases, cost-effective due to transportation costs to and from the Central Command's area of responsibility, accelerated aging due to high operational tempo, environmental degradation, and the need to keep up-armored vehicles in theater to support future rotations. Completely resetting the force will require additional investment over several years to accomplish. The cost today to reset the ground and aviation Global War on Terrorism force is estimated to be \$4.0B and \$1.3B respectively.

Conclusion

Today, we are at war the likes of which we have never fought before. It is literally for our future, for our way of life. Our enemy is ruthless and knows no rules, no laws, and no bounds. He fights to kill Americans and those Iraqis who have stepped forward and are standing firm to prevent another murderous regime – this one based on extremism in its most brutal form – from replacing Hussein and his henchmen. Your Marines standing shoulder-to-shoulder with other young Americans of our military services, and the Iraqi Security forces, are performing extremely well due directly to the support they have received from the Congress. As we sit here today in this great hall protected by these young Americans, they are fighting an enemy that shows no quarter, but the ideals of American decency and honor, their extraordinary courage, dedication, and commitment armor them in a way that nothing else can. Marines and their families realize the danger to the Nation, their vital role, and the magnitude of their responsibilities. Many have been wounded or killed in action over the past year carrying out these responsibilities. In the National debate over the root causes of war some of us may doubt the wisdom of our actions in this troubled land, but they do not as many of

you who have traveled there have discovered. We owe these Marines and our Sailors, Soldiers, and Airmen an irredeemable debt.

Marines continue to demonstrate that we are an expeditionary force in readiness – *Most Ready When the Nation is Least Ready*. Our number one priority is fighting the war and resetting the force for the future. Your sustained commitment to improving our Nation's armed forces to meet the challenges of today, as well as those of the future, is vital to the security of our nation. We recognize Seabasing as being more than tactical level operations, but rather a **National Capability** that Regional Combatant Commanders can immediately apply to emerging threats transcending all levels of warfare. No longer will we need to rely on critical airfields and seaports in the initial phases of conflict.

On behalf of all Marines, we thank the Committee for your continued support that has made us more effective in the fight, saved lives, and will allow us to protect the Nation in an uncertain future.