

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED BY  
THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

STATEMENT OF  
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ASSISTANT COMMANDANT OF THE U.S. MARINE CORPS  
BEFORE THE  
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT  
ON  
MILITARY CURRENT READINESS

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Chair, Ranking Member, and esteemed members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to report on the United States Marine Corps' readiness. The Marine Corps exists for one purpose: to fight and win our Nation's battles. In the past year, we have done just that. Your Marines continue to operate across every Geographic Combatant Command, supporting crisis response and contingency operations worldwide. We are modernizing at a time when the character of war is shifting rapidly. Adversaries are fielding advanced weapons and employing new methods designed to erode our warfighting advantage. We are adapting to persevere against these changes and maintain our readiness for our enduring crisis response mission. The work of this Subcommittee is critical to our continued success in our sustained readiness and modernization campaign.

I look forward to working with this Subcommittee over the coming year to ensure we remain ready to fight today as we simultaneously man, train, and equip your Marine Corps for the future.

## **CMC Priorities in Support of Readiness**

The Commandant's priorities established in his 2025 Commandant's Planning Guidance are clear and directly support the force's readiness.

### **Balancing Crisis Response with Modernization**

The top priority is the careful balance of meeting the demands of global crisis response and executing our comprehensive modernization efforts. Our Commandant's guidance has been clear: the Marine Corps must be prepared for today's fight while simultaneously building the force required for tomorrow. This dual focus ensures that our immediate readiness is not sacrificed for future capabilities. Instead, our modernization efforts directly enhance our ability to respond to contingencies with a more lethal, agile, and capable force.

That is also why our North Star is restoring a sufficient Amphibious Ready Group/Marine Expeditionary Unit (ARG/MEU) presence. The ARG/MEU's task-organized forces enable Combatant Commanders to project power decisively and respond to emerging crises from sea-based sovereign United States territory. This model delivers a combat-credible force at the speed of relevance, ensuring the United States can definitively resolve exigent national security challenges as they arise.

### **Naval Integration and Organic Littoral Mobility**

The Marine Corps remains, at its core, a naval expeditionary force. Therefore, our partnership with the United States Navy is central to our identity and our warfighting philosophy. This further emphasizes the need to have sufficient amphibious warships available to conduct integrated training and preparation for the ARG/MEU's. In addition to the ARG/MEU and complementary to our Force Design modernization, we are redoubling our efforts to enhance integration across every domain. This includes the development and procurement of platforms that enable littoral maneuver and sustainment in contested maritime environments. A key component in addressing this is the procurement of the Medium Landing Ship (LSM) and the resourcing of our Littoral Maneuver Bridging Solution (LMBS).

## **Quality of Life**

The bedrock of our readiness is our people. Ensuring a high quality of life for our Marines and their families is not just a moral obligation but a strategic imperative. We are undertaking the most consequential facilities investment in our history through Barracks 2030 and investing heavily in our childcare initiatives to ensure that our Marines and their families have the living conditions and resources they need to remain ready.

## **Recruit, Make, and Retain Marines**

In a competitive talent landscape, the ability to recruit, make, and retain high-quality Marines is paramount. For decades, Marine Corps Recruiting Command has successfully met its accession goals and, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2025, achieved its mission despite persistent challenges across the United States, including a shrinking pool of candidates qualified for military service. We are also retaining Marines at historic levels. We met our FY 2025 retention mission seven months early, retaining the highest percentage of our aggregate cohort since 2010. This success was driven by innovative levers such as the multi-cohort reenlistment model and the Commandant's Retention Program.

## **Maximize the Potential of our Reserve**

We are maximizing the potential of our Reserve Component as an operational force. In FY 2025, over 1,400 Reserve Marines were activated and deployed, and nearly 10,000 participated in 58 exercises worldwide. We project that Global Force Management (GFM) demands will increase for our Reserve forces as we orient on the priorities of the National Defense Strategy. To meet the priorities of the 2026 National Defense Strategy (NDS), we will continue to modernize the Reserve Component, planning for a future end-strength increase and the development of new units with critical, high-demand skill sets.

I am grateful for the support from this Subcommittee that made these successes towards our Commandant's priorities possible. I look forward to continuing this work with the committee as we seek regular, predictable funding that is essential for the Marine Corps to plan, prepare, and succeed.

## **Warfighting Readiness**

The 2026 NDS affirms that the United States' ability to achieve "peace through strength" rests on credible, ready forces able to act with speed and decisiveness in defense of concrete American interests. Defending the homeland and deterring China in the Indo-Pacific through strength are our top operational and developmental priorities. As the Nation's premier stand-in and crisis response force, the Marine Corps remains focused on warfighting readiness—ensuring our Marines are organized, trained, and equipped as forward-deployed, resilient, difficult-to-target, expeditionary, and sea-based Marine Air-Ground Task Forces (MAGTF), offering the Nation agile and lethal options. Consistent with the NDS's priorities, the Marine Corps is maintaining course while increasing speed and intensity—sharpening lethality, strengthening naval integration, and modernizing with urgency. If called upon, we are ready to fight and win across the spectrum of conflict.

Our assessment of warfighting readiness is continuous, candid, and grounded in operational reality. While your Marine Corps remains manned, trained, and equipped – ready to

deploy and fight decisively when called upon – our ability to provide forward military strength and rapid crisis response is increasingly constrained by resourcing and materiel challenges. These sovereign platforms, unfettered by diplomatic entanglements, are essential to naval integration, deterrence, and the Marine Corps' ability to act rapidly in defense of tangible national interests. The use of amphibious forces provides geographic access on our own terms and timeline.

## **Modernization and Lethality**

Our Force Design efforts are enduring and data-driven, focused on the evolving character of warfare. Our Campaign of Learning has led to key adjustments in force structure. We will now field two Marine Littoral Regiments in the Pacific while retaining the 4th Marine Regiment as a traditional infantry regiment. This ensures your Marines are ready for the complex and dynamic challenges of the Pacific Theater. Across the force, we are fielding advanced systems, including the Navy-Marine Expeditionary Ship Interdiction System (NMESIS), the Marine Air Defense Integrated System (MADIS), and new counter-UAS systems to protect our freedom of maneuver. Our infantry battalions are evolving. Through rigorous experimentation, we have validated the return to 13 Marines in a rifle squad and established dedicated Fires and Reconnaissance Companies. The Drone Dominance Task Force is a rapidly evolving effort established to integrate lethal drones across the MAGTF with speed. Our goal is to make these unmanned systems an organic capability at the small unit level, ensuring battlefield dominance. Our invitation stands to visit the Marines in Quantico and see the remarkable work they are doing with drones.

## **Modernization and Training Initiatives**

The Marine Corps is transforming training and education at every echelon. This ensures we will generate and maintain the physical and mental capabilities required to dominate any adversary, given the complexities of modern warfare, and prevail as a lethal component of the Joint Force. Guided by a data-driven learning enterprise, we sustain a culture of excellence by "learning and adapting at speed," instilling a maneuver warfare mentality, and upholding the immutable standards that forge disciplined, combat-effective Marines. As the demands of modern conflict evolve, so too must the training and education that enhance lethality. Training and education are inseparable from combat power. To support this imperative, last year we established the first Deputy Commandant for Training and Education, thanks to this committee's support. This change empowered the Marine Corps to accelerate the modernization of how we build and teach lethality across the force. Our system remains centered on preparing Marines to close with and destroy the enemy on today's battlefield, while developing nimble, adaptive warfighters of character, ready to fight and win in austere maritime expeditionary environments.

## **Training and Education**

Project Tripoli (Live, Virtual, and Constructive Training): Project Tripoli is revolutionizing how we train by fielding the Live, Virtual, and Constructive Training Environment (LVC-TE). This initiative creates a realistic, instrumented, and networked battlespace that seamlessly links live formations on our ranges with Marines in virtual simulators and computer-generated constructive forces. This allows us to replicate the scale and complexity of modern, multi-domain conflict in ways that are impossible on physical ranges alone. Our goal is simple: a ubiquitous training

network, fully deployed across all Marine Corps and Navy installations by the end of FY 2026, ensuring Marines can train in high-end scenarios from their home stations.

Marine Corps Attack Drone Team (MCADT): Established in January 2025, the MCADT was created to accelerate and scale the lessons learned from the proliferation of small, armed drones in modern conflict. The team's work with first-person-view drones directly informs our tactics, techniques, and procedures and was instrumental in creating the Marine Corps' first Attack Drone Operator course. Having already won the first inter-service drone competition and conducted over 100 kinetic demonstrations, the MCADT is ensuring we remain at the cutting edge of this tactical evolution, including the publication of our attack-drone handbook in June 2025.

Training Range Modernization: To properly train with our modernized force, we are undertaking a significant effort to upgrade our training ranges. This initiative, guided by our Range and Training Area Management program, will ensure our ranges can support the requirements of Force Design. This includes upgrading facilities to fully leverage the capabilities of our advanced unmanned systems, fifth-generation aircraft, and long-range precision fires, creating immersive, realistic environments necessary to prepare for high-end conflict.

Project Dynamis: Project Dynamis is our strategic initiative to accelerate the rapid integration and scaling of mature commercial technologies, with a particular focus on artificial intelligence and machine learning, to provide a decisive advantage at every echelon. In FY 2026, we will partner with the Navy's Project Overmatch in the "Dynamis Series," an accelerator sprint designed to rapidly scale open-source, dual-use software that can connect disparate sensors and systems across multiple domains, enhancing our command-and-control capabilities.

## **Training Exercises and Readiness**

The Marine Corps validates its warfighting concepts and enhances readiness through a continuous cycle of global exercises focused on the Indo-Pacific and naval integration. These exercises serve as the crucible for testing new capabilities. During Exercise BALIKATAN 25, for example, the 3d Marine Littoral Regiment employed NMESIS and MADIS for the first time, demonstrating a credible capability to defend key maritime terrain alongside our Philippine allies. These large-scale exercises are essential for building interoperability and refining our campaign of learning.

## **Reserve Training Readiness**

To ensure our Marine Corps Reserve is a ready, resilient, and relevant operational force, capable of fully integrating with the active component, we are providing demanding, realistic, and innovative training opportunities. Along with operational readiness, we continue to focus on more efficient administrative and medical capacity, ensuring each Reserve Marine is ready to activate in support of global demands. Given the finite time each year to train to our demanding standards, our ability to rapidly ensure administrative and medical preparedness for our Reserve Force results in more time to train in critical mission skills. Almost 10,000 Reserve Marines participate in exercises each year, where they not only support service-level requirements and national priorities but also gain invaluable experience, refine technical skills, and improve their

readiness. This high level of participation is essential for ensuring our Reserve units are ready to augment, reinforce, and deploy on short notice.

## **Logistics Modernization for a Contested Environment**

**Supply and Distribution Modernization:** To solve the challenges inherent in operational and tactical distribution in contested environments, the Marine Corps is fielding a family of unmanned logistics systems. The Tactical Resupply Unmanned Aircraft System, currently being fielded, provides an autonomous aerial delivery capability for critical supplies such as ammunition and medical items. Similarly, we are developing larger systems, such as the Aerial Logistics Connector, Medium Aerial Resupply Vehicle – Expeditionary Logistics, and the Autonomous Low-Profile Vessel. These capabilities will provide a diverse and resilient portfolio of multi-modal sustainment options for distributed forces, and we are grateful for the support from Congress to modernize our distribution platforms. However, the challenge of distribution in contested space requires a much larger investment in multiple, expendable, rapidly replicable platforms to enhance the staying power of our distribution network. Continued support for this modernization effort will contribute to greater force resiliency, ensuring your Marines are equipped to fight and win in even the most austere contested environments.

**Logistics Information Technology:** The current Marine Corps Logistics Data & Information Technology systems are a critical vulnerability, unable to support the requirement to sense, make sense, and act at the speed of relevance. To address this vulnerability, we are examining costs, identifying obsolete or redundant capabilities, and assessing cloud integration to acquire fiscally sustainable, audit-compliant, modernized systems. These efforts will facilitate future integration of Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning and help achieve four key objectives: enabling Global Logistics Awareness Decision Making (GLADM), diversifying distribution, improving sustainment, and operationalizing installations. Our ultimate goal is to enable GLADM and Logistics Command and Control in a contested environment across the Joint Logistics Enterprise.

**Installation Resilience and Installation- Counter Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (I-CsUAS):** Our installations are warfighting platforms that must be resilient and defensible. We are hardening critical infrastructure and improving energy resilience by developing on-site microgrids. To counter the growing threat of hostile drones, we are fielding the I-CsUAS. This system of systems integrates sensors with non-kinetic jammers to detect, track, identify, and defeat drone threats to our critical infrastructure. With systems already fielded at key locations, we plan to achieve initial operational capability for the program by the end of FY 2026, ensuring our bases can continue to project power at higher force protection levels.

**Medical Modernization:** Our medical modernization efforts are squarely focused on increasing survivability in the distributed, contested environments envisioned by Force Design. Lessons from modern conflict demonstrate that legacy systems can no longer guarantee life-saving care within the 'golden hour'. To that end, we are pursuing a multifaceted approach that pushes advanced medical capabilities forward in support of distributed forces. We are modernizing our medical capabilities to increase survivability in distributed environments by pushing advanced care closer to the point of injury and enhancing our medical evacuation network.

This construct is highly interoperable with the Joint Force, ensuring robust resupply availability, common sustainment approaches, and the ability to facilitate mutual support. This

modernized treatment and evacuation web, built on our Nation's best science, technology, medical knowledge, and tireless professionals, honors our commitment to treat and save as many Service Members as we can.

A revolutionary component of our medical modernization is investment in room-temperature-stored blood products, particularly freeze-dried plasma. This game-changing technology will liberate our forces from the logistical burdens of cold-chain storage and enable small, dispersed units to carry blood products more easily, dramatically increasing casualty survival rates at the point of injury. This is complemented by our broader efforts to enhance Tactical Combat Casualty Care across the force, ensuring every Marine is a more capable first responder, and by fielding a new, modernized Role 1 Corpsman Assault Pack. The Role 1 Corpsman Assault Pack empowers forward-deployed personnel with advanced medical skills and equipment to provide critical initial care and stabilization. Through our Health Service Support experimentation, we are aggressively pursuing telemedicine capabilities to connect forward-deployed corpsmen with higher-level medical expertise, ensuring our Marines have the best possible chance of survival no matter the clime and place.

### **Prepositioning Modernization**

Global Positioning Network (GPN) Modernization: We are modernizing our prepositioning program's concept of operations to enable the rapid closure of combat-credible forces in contested environments. Current prepositioning models assume permissive environments that are no longer guaranteed. Accordingly, we are shifting away from vulnerable, centralized logistics hubs toward a dispersed, more resilient GPN. GPN is an integrated, flexible web of materiel, positioned afloat and ashore across multiple theaters, with associated littoral enablers. It is the confluence of prepositioned assets with littoral mobility platforms that delivers a functional GPN; without either, the GPN cannot function. This network enables the Fleet Marine Force to rapidly close a combat-credible force to serve as a deterrent against adversarial aggression, or, should deterrence fail, to prevail in conflict. Strategically placed, these depots increase the speed of force closure, enhance sustainment and distribution, and leverage the Joint Logistics Enterprise, Joint Force, and host nation resources. The GPN will require modernizing our Maritime Prepositioning Ships (MPS), ashore sites, and logistics information technology to close and sustain distributed forces in a contested environment.

### **Building and Sustaining a Lethal Force**

The readiness of the Marine Corps is built upon a foundation of healthy, resilient, and well-supported Marines and families, safe and effective practices, suitable infrastructure, and unwavering fiscal accountability.

### **Personnel Readiness**

Recruiting and Retention: We face a declining pool of qualified candidates but still meet goals without compromising our standard of excellence. The Marine Corps Recruiting Command has fought hard and persevered through the last several years to ensure your Marine Corps consists of high-quality young men and women qualified to become Marines. We are well on the way to realizing an optimized start pool and will continue to protect the important time a poolee spends in the Delayed Entry Program, learning what it takes to earn our title and bear it honorably. As we look to the future, it will become increasingly important to invest in modernizing the

recruiting force, marketing, and advertising. Our team is working closely with the DoW Recruitment Task Force on this effort, and I look forward to arranging the necessary discussions to make it happen. Similarly, we must ensure our Military Entrance Processing Stations are sufficiently postured to handle the increased throughput required to adapt.

Talent Management: Our most critical advantage remains the individual Marine, and our talent management initiatives are designed to recruit, develop, and retain the Nation's best. The Commandant's Retention Program has proven highly effective in this endeavor, offering a streamlined, merit-based process to retain our most talented and highest-performing first-term Marines. This initiative was a key driver of our ability to meet the FY 2025 retention mission, a full seven months ahead of schedule. Building on this success, we are developing the Talent Marketplace Engagement Platform (TMPEP). This 21st-century talent ecosystem will create a transparent, data-enabled market to better match the needs of the Marine Corps with each Marine's unique skills, talents, and preferences. TMPEP will empower commanders and individual Marines with better information, leading to improved career satisfaction, higher retention of critical skills, and a more ready and capable force.

Suicide Prevention Initiatives: Every Marine lost to suicide is a tragedy that impacts our entire Corps, and the Calendar Year 2025 numbers remained concerning. Our combat effectiveness is derived directly from the readiness of individual Marines. Therefore, we have placed Marine Corps Total Fitness (MCTF) at the center of our warfighting philosophy. This leadership strategy and lifestyle framework is how we build and sustain peak performance, ensuring every Marine is mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually prepared for the demands of service. This strategy targets all harmful behaviors through a strengths-based approach to prevention. To operationalize MCTF, we are executing the Warrior Athlete Readiness and Resilience (WARR) initiative. This program represents a critical modernization of our human performance infrastructure. While we have established 20 initial WARR centers, our strategic plan is to upgrade our entire inventory of facilities. These centers will deliver training that directly builds combat lethality and survivability. They will apply principles from elite athletics to boost training output. They will connect warfighters to a network of interdisciplinary experts via mobile and virtual technologies. With your continued support, we can scale MCTF across the force, ensuring our Marines remain lethal and ready, supported by strong and resilient families ready to face the challenges ahead.

## **Marine and Family Readiness**

The readiness of our Marines is inextricably linked to the readiness of their families. We continue to focus on expanding access to childcare by addressing staffing shortages with aggressive recruitment and retention incentives, and by expanding community-based fee assistance programs. We recognize that access to affordable, high-quality childcare is a significant stressor and a critical component of family readiness. While we have made progress, with eleven installations able to meet demand within 45 days, waitlists persist, driven primarily by a shortage of qualified workers. To address this, we have implemented powerful incentives, including a 100 percent childcare discount for employees, which has helped stabilize our direct care workforce. We have expanded our military-community partnership programs, such as Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood, to provide fee assistance for families who cannot access on-installation care. Furthermore, we are actively supporting military spouses in maintaining their professional careers through the Spouse Relicensing and Business

Reimbursement Program, which provides up to \$1,000 for professional license transfer costs during a permanent change of station. Since its inception, this program disbursed over \$235,000 to 587 spouses, providing tangible support to their career continuity and family financial stability.

## **Infrastructure Readiness**

Our infrastructure readiness is undergoing its most significant overhaul in a generation. Barracks 2030 is our comprehensive, multi-billion-dollar effort to address decades of deferred maintenance by improving the management, modernization, and material condition of our unaccompanied housing. This initiative represents an 11-year, \$30 billion commitment to recapitalize our unaccompanied housing portfolio. We are professionalizing barracks management, having already contracted 200 building managers; renovating and replacing dilapidated facilities, with 11 barracks awarded renovations in FY 2024; and standardizing furnishings and door locks across the enterprise, with 159 barracks already receiving new furnishings.

In FYs 2024 and 2025, we awarded contracts for the renovation, repair, or replacement of 23 barracks, providing improved housing for more than 8,300 Marines. Concurrently, and central to this entire effort, we are working to right-size our overall facility inventory by developing comprehensive Installation Master Plans. By the end of FY 2026, we expect to have 12 master plans fully compliant with DoW guidance, with the remaining 10 planned for completion by FY 2029, contingent on funding.

## **Clean Audit Opinion**

Your Marine Corps remains committed to the highest standards of fiscal accountability. For a historic third consecutive year, the Marine Corps has achieved a clean audit opinion on its financial statements, a testament to responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars. Our fiscal discipline ensures that every dollar entrusted to us is maximized to enhance the readiness and lethality of the force.

## **Readiness Risks**

While we have made significant strides, several key challenges and readiness risks require persistent focus and critical resourcing decisions. The support of this Committee in addressing these issues is essential to ensuring the Marine Corps remains the Nation's premier force-in-readiness.

## **Amphibious Warships**

While our Marines remain the most formidable fighting force in the world, ready to deploy and win in any clime and place, our ability to respond to global contingencies from the sea is increasingly stressed by resourcing and materiel challenges, which have reduced the availability of our amphibious warships. Amphibious warships are the essential sovereign platforms from which the Marine Corps projects naval power. The aging fleet is not being sufficiently replaced. Meeting a sufficient ARG/MEU presence is increasingly challenging with our current amphibious fleet. We are working diligently with our Navy and industry partners to address constraints and improve the availability of amphibious warships.

Addressing the annual multi-billion-dollar requirement for maintenance, modernization, and new construction is critical to reversing this trend. To meet this requirement effectively, we strongly advocate for the expanded and consistent use of Multi-Ship Procurement (MSP). This proven strategy provides our industrial partners with the stability and predictability needed to maintain a skilled workforce, reduce per-vessel costs, and deliver ships on a reliable schedule. Committing to multi-ship contracts is the most direct way to recapitalize our fleet efficiently, ensure the predictable delivery of these essential sovereign platforms, and guarantee our ability to maintain a sufficient ARG/MEU presence.

We are working closely with our Navy partners within the construct of the newly established Amphibious Force Readiness Board, utilizing a common readiness lexicon established in the Commandant of the Marine Corps' and Chief of Naval Operations' dual-signed Amphibious Terms of Reference, to identify solutions that ensure the ARG/MEU priority is achieved and sustained. I want to thank this subcommittee for its continued support not only for amphibious shipping but also for the work to invigorate the entire shipbuilding enterprise.

### **Organic Littoral Mobility**

Marines project power and maneuver in contested maritime environments to persist, operate, fight, and win in support of naval campaigns. Force Design has ensured that our capability and capacity to accomplish this mission is enduring; however, there is a gap in organic littoral mobility for our stand-in force. This is distinct from our Amphibious Warship readiness risk, but just as decisive.

The LSM, now determined to be the "build-to-print" Damen LST-100 design, is our solution to maneuver and sustain forces in contested littoral environments. Utilizing an innovative approach through a vessel construction manager and multiple shipyards, we will achieve the right balance of capacity, affordability, and speed to field the LSM to our warfighters. The LSM is our solution to close a critical gap in littoral mobility, and we are working to field this capability as rapidly as possible. In the interim, in partnership with the Navy, we are pursuing a bridging strategy, through LMBS, using chartered vessels and Military Sealift Command Expeditionary Fast Transports with hybrid civilian and military crews, to provide a near-term solution until LSM is fielded in appreciable numbers. This near and mid-term capability is not a substitute for LSM's dedicated and organic capability.

### **Maritime Prepositioning Force**

While the Marine Corps has invested heavily in our capacity to sustain our forces in contested environments, these capabilities are designed to complement the irreplaceable maneuverability and responsiveness of our Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF). Therefore, the age and readiness of our MPF presents a significant readiness challenge. The MPF is a strategic asset – agnostic of geographic command – that enables the rapid closure of a combat credible force. The aged MPF fleet presents a significant readiness risk, and recapitalization is urgently required to ensure this strategic capability remains viable. To ensure the long-term viability of this capability and access to austere secondary ports worldwide, the Marine Corps is developing requirements for the Maritime Prepositioning Ship, Next (MPS(X)), a right-sized vessel capable of accessing these ports.

Additionally, the nearly 60-year-old Marine Corps Aviation Logistics Ship (TAVB) must be replaced. This platform delivers critical afloat intermediate-level maintenance and supplies to

sustain aviation combat readiness. Sustained advocacy is required to steer the MPS(X) and TAVB(X) through the acquisition process for the recapitalization of this vital strategic capability.

## **Aviation Readiness**

Marine Corps aviation readiness remains constrained by maintenance and supply resources. This challenge impacts 5th-generation fleet modernization while maintaining readiness during legacy platform transition. We are particularly focused on addressing the readiness and safety of our premier assault support aircraft, the MV-22 Osprey. The MV-22 has a commendable operational record, having flown over 750,000 hours with 114 operational deployments. The mishap rate is lower than that of most Type/Model/Series aircraft in Marine Aviation. However, the platform's uniqueness, inherent complexity, and material challenges have contributed to maintenance inefficiencies, preventable mishaps, and two fleet-wide groundings in FY 2024 and FY 2025.

In response, the Marine Corps is pursuing a multi-faceted approach to enhance safety and fleet modernization. We have added controls to our procedures that have already proven successful in preventing catastrophic mishaps, and we are diligently implementing all recommendations from comprehensive reviews by both NAVAIR and the Government Accountability Office (GAO). Of the 32 recommendations identified in the V-22 Comprehensive Review, 24 are closed, 5 are in planning for completion this year, and 3 have plans in place and are being monitored. Concurrently, all recommendations from the GAO report are being implemented. Key technical improvements include fielding an improved Proprotor Gearbox with advanced triple-melted steel, redesigning the Input Quill Assembly, and replacing entire engine nacelles to boost reliability. These material solutions are a critical part of a broader modernization effort to ensure the Osprey's enduring readiness – given its unparalleled capabilities and relevance.

These challenges underscore the urgent need for a more agile, data-driven, and predictive sustainment system. To effectively implement concepts like Distributed Aviation Operations, such a system must be fully resourced to ensure our Air Combat Element can maintain its combat effectiveness in a distributed, high-tempo environment.

## **Conclusion**

The United States Marine Corps stands ready to answer the Nation's call. We are manned, trained, and equipped as the global crisis-response force, and we are modernizing to ensure that readiness persists. The way ahead is clear. Force Design is not an end state but a journey—one that ensures we adapt faster than our adversaries, integrates with the Navy and Joint Force, and remain ready for the future fight. Our charge is to remain the world's finest fighting force, organized, trained, and equipped to meet the challenges of today, tomorrow, and the next 250 years. To succeed, we require your partnership. To maintain our readiness and lethality, we need predictable and sustained resourcing. With your support, Marines will remain first to fight, and your Marines will win. Thank you for your time and for your unwavering support of your United States Marines.