

Senate Armed Service Committee
Advance Policy Questions for Lieutenant General David Berger, USMC
Nominee for Appointment to the Grade of General
and to be Commandant of the Marine Corps

Duties

Section 8043 of title 10, U.S. Code, describes the duties and functions of the Commandant of the Marine Corps and requires that the officer nominated for appointment to the position have had significant experience in joint duty assignments, including at least one full tour of duty in a joint duty assignment as a flag officer.

What is your understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the Commandant of the Marine Corps?

Section 8043, title 10, U. S. Code, outlines the duties and responsibilities of the Commandant of the Marine Corps. The Commandant, subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of the Navy, shall preside over the Headquarters, Marine Corps and facilitate the recruiting, training, organizing, and equipping of the Marine Corps to support military operations by Combatant Commanders. The Commandant shall further perform such duties not otherwise assigned by law, as assigned by the President, the Secretary of Defense, or the Secretary of the Navy. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Commandant is responsible for advising the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense.

What background and experience, including joint duty assignments, do you possess that you believe qualify you to perform these duties?

I have served in a variety of key service and joint assignments in my career spanning more than 38 years. I served on the Joint Staff as a policy planner in the Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate, J-5. As a General Officer, I have commanded Marines at all levels including as the Commanding General, 1st Marine Division, Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Commanding General, U.S. Marine Forces, Pacific, and Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command, and the Deputy Commandant for Combat Development and Integration, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps.

Do you meet the joint duty requirements for this position?

Yes.

Do you believe that there are any steps that you need to take to enhance your ability to perform the duties and responsibilities of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, particularly in regard to serving as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and assisting the Secretary of the Navy in performing certain acquisition-related functions?

No.

If confirmed, what innovative ideas would you consider providing to the Secretary of Defense in your role as a member of the Armed Forces Policy Council?

The Armed Forces Policy Council was established to advise the Secretary of Defense on matters of broad policy relating to the Armed Services. As the Joint Force has a renewed focus on business reform, this council presents a venue to create dialogue across the Joint Force on successful innovative solutions to challenging problems that affect the Department as a whole that have been developed within the Services and the Joint Staff. If confirmed, I would look to bring successes in the development of effective resource management tools and methods to streamline the acquisition process for possible use by other agencies within the Department of Defense.

If confirmed, what innovative ideas would you consider providing to the Secretary of the Navy for enhancing the organization, training, and equipping of the Marine Corps?

We are a naval force and the capabilities we bring to Joint operations reach their peak of utility when applied in an integrated naval context. We have a long history and considerable experience operating in this fashion. Nonetheless, the challenges of the future are not the same as those of the past. Therefore we must adapt our thinking to ensure that we—the Naval services—organize, train, and equip to address the operational imperatives described in the National Defense Strategy and the Defense Planning Guidance.

We are innovating right now through new concepts such as Littoral Operations in a Contested Environment and Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations. I would seek to discuss with the Secretary and the CNO ways in which we might increase the speed of that innovation. I believe that we can accomplish this by tackling the challenges as a naval team, establishing common objectives, prioritizing our resources, and pursuing required capabilities in a collaborative fashion.

What are your goals, if confirmed, for the transformation of the Marine Corps to meet new and emerging threats?

Our goal will always be not merely to meet new and emerging threats, but to maintain a margin of overmatch over potential adversaries. We do not want a fair fight. Among the more significant changes we must make are the rapid expansion of robotic and autonomous systems, major changes to our individual and collective training systems, and development of our offensive and defensive capabilities in the information operating environment. Progress in these areas and others will require accelerating business reform initiatives and streamlining the existing acquisition process and structure.

In successive National Defense Authorization Acts (NDAAs) beginning in Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 and culminating in FY 2019, Congress expanded and refined the acquisition-related functions of the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

If confirmed, how would you assist the Secretary of the Navy in the performance of certain acquisition-related functions, while ensuring compatibility with the duties and responsibilities of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition (as established in title 10, U.S. Code, sections 8014 and 8016)?

If confirmed, I would assist the Secretary of the Navy in the performance of specified acquisition-related functions in a number of ways: requirements development; decisions on balancing resources and priorities, and associated trade-offs among cost, schedule, technical feasibility, and performance on major defense acquisition programs (MDAPs); control of requirements creep; recommendation of trade-offs among life-cycle cost, schedule, and performance objectives, and procurement quantity objectives; program termination when appropriate; development and management of career paths in acquisition for military personnel; and assignment/training of contracting officer representatives.

The Secretary of the Navy has designated ASN (RDA) as the Naval Acquisition Executive (NAE), with overall responsibility for acquisition in the Navy; however, this responsibility does not extend to the determination of military requirements and the operational test and evaluation of military capabilities. As Deputy Commandant for Combat Development and Integration, I have worked closely with the ASN (RDA), his principal military and other deputies. I recognize and support the integral relationship between the Commandant/Headquarters, Marine Corps and the NAE and staff.

Congress has also empowered us with middle tier acquisition authorities that we are now employing to leverage technology growth, innovate, and enhance capabilities in the force. These capabilities along with more traditional means provide the opportunity to more rapidly develop the force.

If confirmed as the Commandant of the Marine Corps—what actions would you take to improve all three aspects of the acquisition process—requirements, acquisition, and budgeting?

Given recent legislative acquisition reform, it would be a good first step to assess what actions we have taken within the Marine Corps to date, and the results of those actions.

In defining and refining our requirements, we must balance the desire to achieve perfect clarity and include every possible role of a given capability against the practical aspects of rapid technology development and ever-improving peer competitors/threats. Rapid prototyping and getting those prototypes into the hands of Marines early on will be key.

Where joint programs make sense, we should remain full partners and seek to accelerate the acquisition process. Early and frequent coordination with industry will help not only our requirements development actions but also acquisition, especially in the early stages of equipment fielding. We also must ensure that industry carries their fair share of risk throughout the acquisition process.

We must continue to find ways to achieve more stable and predictive program budgeting over time. Additionally, we must pursue measures that will improve transparency and ensure full accountability for the expenditure of resources provided by Congress.

What actions would you propose, if any, to ensure that requirements are realistic, technically achievable, and prioritized?

I believe that an annual, critical review process is essential. Each year we assess the current state of the Marine Corps against the prevailing strategic guidance with a long view (at least one Future Year Defense Program (FYDP)) to determine which current capabilities can be reduced or eliminated and which capabilities we must strive to achieve and in what timeframe. Based on this critical assessment we build the Marine Corps Enterprise Integration Plan (MCEIP) that lays out our priority areas, taking into consideration technical feasibility and resource availability. This plan is ultimately passed to the programmers where additional scrutiny is imposed to ensure prudent expenditure of taxpayer dollars to achieve critical warfighting capabilities in a timely and efficient manner.

What specific measures would you recommend to control “requirements creep” in the defense acquisition system?

Requirements creep typically comes from one of two directions: the Service identifies an additional task or application for a specific program, or the vendor identifies additional capabilities beyond that listed in the original requirements document.

Controlling requirements creep requires a degree of discipline (not all desires are needs); a realistic view of technological maturity; and a rational assessment of additional cost versus expanded or improved capability. There are times when it makes sense to modify a requirements document to take advantage of an affordable adjustment that would significantly improve or expand the capability. No two cases are identical and each case should be weighed in the larger context of overall Marine Corps requirements.

How would you utilize your authority to arrest the exponential escalation in cost that, in recent history, has marked the acquisition life-cycle of Service platforms and weapons systems?

Well defined requirements, adequate resourcing, and realistic development, testing and fielding schedules go a long way toward mitigating cost growth when coupled with incentivized contracting and sound program management. In some cases, increases are unavoidable; however, they can be managed if they are identified early and can be incorporated into the phased program management plan. If confirmed, I would take the following actions:

- Coordinate with key stakeholders, e.g. ASN (RDA), DC P&R, DC CD&I, to pushing authority and accountability back down to where it belongs, at the lowest capable level.

- Leverage my support/advisory role during Material Development Decision Review and subsequent milestone decision reviews to align material solutions to identified requirements.
- Emphasize development of realistic program cost estimates.

In your view, in whom should accountability for large-scale acquisition failures and/or extraordinary cost overruns vest?

Ultimately – for Marine Corps programs – both the Commandant of the Marine Corps and ASN (RDA) would be accountable to the Secretary of the Navy for acquisition failures and/or extraordinary cost overruns.

Within the Marine Corps, the Commander of Marine Corps Systems Command, PEOs, and Program Managers all have a responsibility for oversight of how programs are managed, to include risks, trade-offs, and cost-schedule performance.

In your view, are the roles and responsibilities in the acquisition process now assigned to the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the other Service Chiefs appropriate? Are there other acquisition-related roles or responsibilities that should be assigned to the Service Chiefs?

Yes. The roles and responsibilities now assigned are appropriate, and the NDAA provisions of the last several years have increased the Service Chiefs' roles, responsibilities and commensurate authorities. We should continue to look for appropriate ways to streamline the acquisition processes and bring Service Chiefs back into a central role.

A natural tension exists between the objectives of major defense acquisition programs to reduce cost and accelerate schedule and the need to ensure performance meets requirements and specifications—the objective of the test and evaluation function.

Has the Secretary of the Navy assigned to the Commandant of the Marine Corps responsibility for those aspects of the function of research and development relating to test and evaluation for Marine Corps acquisition programs? If so, how would you exercise this responsibility, if confirmed?

Yes. Currently, T&E authorities reside within two separate elements of the Marine Corps' Acquisition Community: the Marine Corps Systems Command is responsible for DT&E and the Marine Corps Operational Test and Evaluation Activity is responsible for OT&E. These are supplemented capabilities at the DoD level.

What is your assessment of the appropriate balance between the desire to reduce acquisition cycle times and the need to perform adequate test and evaluation?

Adequate test and evaluation is paramount to ensuring our support of the Marine Corps mission. Acquisition test and evaluation consists of two distinct processes. First,

Developmental T&E provides the essential metrics that enable the overall management and execution of Contractor and product performance. DT&E verifies the Contractor's work and product performance to its specification. Operational Test and Evaluation assesses if the weapon system delivers the required warfighting capability within the context of the Mission Profile and Concept of Operations. OT&E validates the system meets the Warfighters capability needs.

Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe it appropriate to procure weapon systems and equipment that have not been demonstrated through test and evaluation to be operationally effective, suitable, and survivable?

Rarely, if ever, would it be appropriate to procure systems and equipment in support of the warfighter without requisite testing and evaluation. With the means available today to rapidly prototype and procure limited quantities for experimentation, there is no real justification to take shortcuts with regards to processes that will ensure optimum operation, safety and maintainability and the resultant tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) that are the products of prudent test and evaluation activities.

What do you see as the role of the developmental and operational test and evaluation communities with respect to rapid acquisition, spiral acquisition, and other evolutionary acquisition processes?

For Rapid Acquisition, the Marine Corps established a Marine Corps Rapid Capabilities Office. The RCO ties in all communities in the development of one consolidated plan and report that yields both a technical (DT&E) and military utility (OT&E) assessment with each effort. The General Officer Board of Director's, which I currently am a member of as DC, CD&I, meets quarterly to make decisions and to maintain continuity of effort and momentum. Part of the Marine Corps RCO's portfolio includes a concept from the CMC's innovation challenge to drive the warfighters' innovations to reality in under two years.

Both spiral and evolutionary development programs afford accelerated prototyping and fielding but along traditional acquisition authorities. Again, adequate test and evaluation is paramount to the success of these programs.

Are you satisfied with Marine Corps test and evaluation capabilities, including the test and evaluation workforce and infrastructure?

If confirmed, I would look for ways to streamline Developmental Test & Evaluation and Operational Test & Evaluation. The goal is to accelerate fielding without sacrificing necessary test and evaluation.

In which areas, if any, do you feel the Marine Corps should be developing new test and evaluation capabilities?

The first step should always be to find out if there are ways to capitalize on investments from OSD and the other Services. There may be ways to apply machine learning as well as testing and evaluation done by organizations like DIUx.

If confirmed, how would you accelerate the development of these new capabilities?

In conjunction with DASN RDT&E we began an Advanced Naval Technology and Tactics Exercise and Exploration program in April 2017. Since that time we have evolved the process of linking operators and technologists (warfare centers and industry) to rapidly innovate and field relevant capabilities supporting emerging concepts. This program meets the assessment criteria for middle tier acquisition and has been a catalyst for change. Through two of these evolutions we have developed over 50 new prototype technologies that address NDS goals. If confirmed, I will continue to support activities of this nature.

Additionally, we can continue to accelerate development of capabilities by placing significant emphasis on our investments, in both manpower and resources, into our RDT&E activities, and continue to partner with organizations such as the Office of Naval Research, DARPA, SCO and DIU.

What are your views on the appropriate roles of OSD developmental and operational testing organizations with respect to testing of Marine Corps systems?

Regardless of a potential role that OSD may have in developmental and operational testing, the Secretary of the Navy, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps retain authority and accountability for developmental testing and evaluation.

OSD could serve in a contributing or enabling manner, sharing new and innovative test concepts, tools and techniques across the Services. The OSD staff could identify and promote best practices while they are still new and relevant.

Section 8043 provides that “[s]ubject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of the Navy, the Commandant of the Marine Corps shall exercise supervision, consistent with the authority assigned to commanders of unified or specified combatant commands . . . over such of the members and organizations of the Marine Corps and the Navy as the Secretary determines.”

Over which members and organizations of the Marine Corps and the Navy has the Secretary of the Navy directed the Commandant of the Marine Corps to exercise supervision and what is the scope of such supervision?

Pursuant to Section 6011, title 10, the Secretary of the Navy issued U. S. Navy Regulations to provide additional guidance regarding the authorities and responsibilities of the Commandant of the Marine Corps. The Marine Corps subsequently published, and the Secretary of the Navy approved, the Marine Corps Manual to supplement the U. S. Navy Regulations.

The Marine Corps Manual establishes that the Commandant commands the Marine Corps and is the senior officer in the Service. In this role the Commandant retains administrative control over all forces in the Service and is directly responsible to the Secretary of the Navy for exercising supervision of the administration, discipline, internal organization, training, requirements, efficiency, and readiness of the Marine Corps; for the operation of the Marine Corps materiel support system; and for the total performance of the Marine Corps. This included but is not limited to bases, camps, depots, and training centers. The Commandant also exercises supervision over Marine Corps recruiting activities, Marine Corps Reserve Support Activities, and all military forces not assigned to combatant commanders.

If confirmed, how would you exercise meaningful supervision of such members and organizations, while ensuring compatibility with the authorities of the combatant commanders?

If confirmed, I will exercise meaningful supervision through appropriate administrative and support processes and procedures. This will encompass reviewing and monitoring any actions to organize, train, equip forces to ensure the Marine Corps provides the required capabilities and forces to fulfill specific needs of the combatant commanders. These actions will ensure compatibility and will not infringe on the combatant commanders' ability to exercise combatant command authority over assigned forces.

In addition to the duties enumerated in section 8043, the law provides that the Commandant of the Marine Corps shall perform such other military duties as are assigned to him by the President, the Secretary of Defense, or the Secretary of the Navy.

In light of the lines of effort set forth in the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS), what other military duties do you anticipate the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of the Navy will assign to you, if confirmed?

The Marine Corps is the nation's 911 force – a force that is most ready when the nation is least ready. As such, we are poised to respond to all types of crises in line with our roles and missions. The most salient aspect of "such other duties as are assigned" is that these other duties are unknowable but are still important and usually exigent in nature. This requires a degree of flexibility to respond to crises that are sometimes outside of existing guidance. If confirmed, I will ensure the Marine Corps remains the nation's force in readiness that has the flexibility needed to respond to these other military duties while not losing focus on our strategic direction and existential threats.

If confirmed, what duties and responsibilities will you assign to the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps?

The Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, has the authorities and duties with respect to the Marine Corps as the Commandant may delegate or prescribe, with approval of the Secretary of the

Navy. It is my intention that the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps focus on managing the Marine Corps' critical processes.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff

Section 921 of the FY17 NDAA made changes to section 151 of title 10, U. S. Code, concerning the service of members of the Joint Chiefs (other than the Chairman) as military advisors to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense.

What is your assessment of the authorities of, and process by which members of the Joint Chiefs (other than the Chairman) provide military advice and opinions to the President, National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, and civilian leadership of the Department of Defense?

Whereas the chairman must provide advice, members of the Joint Chiefs may provide advice to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense on a particular matter in their capacity as military advisors after first informing the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman. A member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (other than the Chairman) may submit to the Chairman advice or an opinion in disagreement with, or advice or an opinion in addition to, the advice presented by the Chairman to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense; However, if a member submits such advice or opinion, the Chairman shall present the advice or opinion of such member at the same time he presents his own advice to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense, as the case may be. The Chairman shall establish procedures to ensure that the presentation of his own advice to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense is not unduly delayed by reason of the submission of the individual advice or opinion of another member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The procedures appear adequate to me, but I will be attentive to the process and prepared to offer additional views in future engagements with this committee.

If confirmed, would you have any hesitance in providing your best military advice to the President, National Security Council, Homeland Security Council, and civilian leadership of the Department of Defense, even when your advice and opinions might differ from those of the Chairman or the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

No.

Use of Military Force

In your view, what factors should be considered in making recommendations to the President on the use of military force?

It is difficult to set forth specific factors because each situation will be factually distinct. Several factors, however, would be appropriate to consider in all situations. These are that a national security interest of the United States is at risk or, alternatively, that a national objective is furthered through the use of military force; the likelihood of success of the military operation; and the legality under both domestic and international law for the use of military force.

In your view, what is the appropriate role of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in establishing policies for the use of military force and rules of engagement?

The members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff are military advisers to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the principal military adviser. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has promulgated Secretary of Defense-approved Standing Rules of Engagement/Standing Rules for the Use of Force for U.S. Forces (CJCSI 3121.01B), which govern the application of force in military operations. These Standing Rules of Engagement are the base upon which mission-specific rules of engagement are built. The facts and circumstances of each mission will dictate the rules of engagement for that mission. If confirmed, as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I and other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, through our staffs, may provide advice as to what mission-specific rules of engagement and other policies governing the use of military force should be approved to achieve military and national objectives.

Do you agree with the interpretations and applications of the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) made by both the Obama and Trump administrations?

I believe the interpretations and applications by both the Obama and Trump administrations of the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) allow for effective use of force against those entities deemed to be covered under the 2001 AUMF. The 2001 AUMF provides the domestic legal authority for the United States to use military force, including detention, against those nations, organizations, or persons the President determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or harbored such organizations or persons. All three branches of governments have recognized the ongoing authority conferred by the 2001 AUMF and its application to al-Qa'ida, the Taliban, and to forces associated with those two organizations within and outside Afghanistan. The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has been determined to be an associated force.

In your view, are extant policies and processes for determining which forces of other nations are eligible for Collective Self-Defense by U.S. forces, and under what conditions, adequate and appropriate?

The policies and processes by which the President and the Secretary of Defense authorize collective self-defense rules of engagement are adequate and appropriate. The Chairman of

the Joint Chiefs of Staff has promulgated Secretary of Defense-approved Standing Rules of Engagement/Standing Rules for the Use of Force for U.S. Forces (CJCSI 3121.01B), which includes a menu of mission-specific supplemental rules of engagement that may be approved operation-by-operation, one of which is for authorization to defend designated foreign forces or individuals from a hostile act or demonstrated hostile intent. The Instruction provides that only the President or Secretary of Defense may authorize the “collective self-defense” supplemental measure. To the extent I can discuss in an open forum, the criteria for the provision of collective self-defense and limiting principles on the use of collective self-defense are both adequate and appropriate.

Does the training of U.S. forces authorized to engage in the Collective Self-Defense of the forces of another nation accurately convey to the level of tactical execution the scope and limits of any Collective Self-Defense authorized?

The Department of Defense Law of War Program, the Chairman’s implementing instruction, and the Services’ respective Law of War Program directives establish a requirement for commanders to train their forces on the law of war. Inherent in this obligation, is a requirement for commanders to train their forces on the applicable rules of engagement, including authorized collective self-defense rules of engagement, regulating a military operation. Commanders, their subordinate leaders, and supporting judge advocates develop, teach, train, and re-train their forces on the applicable rules of engagement through myriad tactical decision games, case-studies, vignettes, exercises, and small unit-level classes and discussions prior to and while deployed in support of military operations.

According to the 2018 NDS, Dynamic Force Employment (DFE) will allow for the more “flexibl[e] use [of] ready forces to shape proactively the strategic environment while maintaining readiness to respond to contingencies and ensure long-term warfighting readiness.”

If confirmed as the Commandant of the Marine Corps, what role will you play in authorizing the use of Marine Corps forces for DFE missions?

The Commandant of the Marine Corps is responsible for the organization, training, and equipping our force. That force – by law – must be the most ready when the nation is least ready. If confirmed, my role will be to advise the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Secretary of Defense on the best use of Marine forces within the DFE construct.

Relationships

The law and traditional practice establish important relationships between the Commandant of the Marine Corps and other officials and organizations of the U.S. Government and the DOD. Please describe your understanding of the relationship of the Commandant of the Marine Corps to each of the following:

The Secretary of Defense

The Secretary of Defense is the principle assistant to the President in all matters relating to the Department of Defense. Subject to the direction of the President, the Secretary of Defense has authority, direction, and control over the Department.

The Deputy Secretary of Defense

The Deputy Secretary of Defense is the Chief Management Officer of the Department, acting for and on behalf of the Secretary, performing duties and exercising authority the Secretary of Defense prescribes. Subject to the authority, direction and control of the Secretary of the Navy, if confirmed, I would be responsible to the Secretary of Defense and the Deputy Secretary of Defense for the operation of the United States Marine Corps.

The Under Secretaries of Defense

The Under Secretaries of Defense are the principal staff assistants and advisers to the Secretary regarding matters related to their functional areas. Within their areas, Under Secretaries exercise policy and oversight functions. They may issue instructions and directive type memoranda that implement policy approved by the Secretary applicable to all DoD components.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

The Chairman is the principal military advisor to the President and Secretary of Defense. The President directs communications between himself and the Secretary of Defense to the Combatant Commanders via the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and may assign duties to the Chairman to assist the President and the Secretary of Defense in performing their command function. If confirmed, I would cooperate fully with the Chairman in the performance of his responsibilities.

The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff performs his duties as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and other duties as assigned by the Chairman with the approval of the Secretary of Defense. If confirmed, I would cooperate fully with the Vice Chairman in the performance of his responsibilities.

The Secretary of the Navy

The Secretary of the Navy is the head of the Department of the Navy and is responsible for, and has authority to conduct, all of its affairs. Except for the Title 10 duties and responsibilities as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Commandant performs his duties under the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of the Navy and is directly responsible to the Secretary. The function of the Headquarters, Marine Corps, is to assist the Secretary of the Navy in carrying out his responsibilities.

The Chief of Naval Operations

The Chief of Naval Operations is subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of the Navy, responsible to transmit plans and recommendations to the Secretary, and advise the Secretary with regards to recommendations and plans (section 5033 in Title 10). If confirmed as Commandant of the Marine Corps, I will work with Chief of Naval Operations regarding all matters of planning, training, and execution of joint Navy and Marine Corps programs, platforms, and concepts in support of the Navy and Marine Corps expeditionary team.

The Under Secretary of the Navy

The Under Secretary of the Navy is the deputy and principal assistant to the Secretary, and acts with full authority of the Secretary in managing the Department. The Under Secretary serves as the Chief of Staff of the Secretariat and the Chief Operating Officer of the Department. He acts for and on behalf of the Secretary, performing duties and exercising authority the Secretary prescribes. If confirmed, I would be responsible to the Secretary of Navy and the Under Secretary for the operation of the United States Marine Corps.

The Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition

The Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition serves as the Department of the Navy's Acquisition Executive. The Assistant Secretary establishes policies and procedures and manages the Navy's Research, Development and Acquisition activities in accordance with DoD 5000 Series Directives. If confirmed, I will ensure coordination with the Assistant Secretary in addressing matters that may impact the acquisition policy and programs of the United States Marine Corps.

The other Assistant Secretaries of the Navy

The four Assistant Secretaries of the Navy set the Department of the Navy's strategic direction by developing and overseeing policies and programs within their respective functional areas. If confirmed, I will ensure coordination with the Assistant Secretaries in addressing matters that may impact their respective domains.

The General Counsel of the Navy

The General Counsel is the chief legal and ethics officer of the Department of Navy and serves as counsel to the Secretary and other Secretariat officials. The General Counsel's duties include providing legal and policy advice to officials of the Department of the Navy, as well as making the controlling legal determinations within the Department. If confirmed, I would establish and maintain a close professional relationship with the General Counsel and his staff, and would actively seek his guidance to ensure that United States Marine Corps

policies and practices are in strict accord with the law and the highest principles of ethical conduct.

The Judge Advocate General of the Navy

The Judge Advocate General of the Navy provides legal and policy advice to the Secretary of the Navy, directs the Judge Advocate General's Corps, and is primarily responsible for providing legal advice and services regarding the Uniform Code of Military Justice. In coordination with the General Counsel of the Navy, the Judge Advocate General serves as military legal advisor to the Secretary of the Navy. The Judge Advocate General maintains a close relationship with the General Counsel and the Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant on matters of common interest.

The Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps

With the approval of the Secretary of the Navy, the Assistant Commandant has the authority and duties with respect to the Marine Corps as the Commandant delegates or assigns to him. Orders issued by the Assistant Commandant in performing such duties have the same effect as those issued by the Commandant. If confirmed, the Assistant Commandant and I will work seamlessly to ensure the successful operation of the United States Marine Corps.

The Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant

The Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant of the Marine Corps (SJA to CMC) is the senior uniformed legal advisor to the Commandant and Headquarters, Marine Corps staff and agencies. In particular, the SJA to CMC supervises and manages the practice areas of military justice, operational law, civil and administrative law, legal assistance, and ethics.

The Counsel for the Commandant

The Counsel for the Commandant of the Marine Corps, as a component of the Office of the General Counsel of the Navy, provides the Marine Corps with legal advice in the following areas: acquisition law, including international transactions; business and commercial law; real and personal property law; civilian personnel and labor law; fiscal law; environmental law; intellectual property law; ethics and standards of conduct.

The Inspector General of the Marine Corps

The Inspector General of the Marine Corps, as a component of the Office of the Navy Inspector General, is organized to provide IG functional support to the Secretary of the Navy and the Commandant of the Marine Corps. The Inspector General of the Marine Corps will promote Marine Corps combat readiness, institutional integrity, effectiveness, discipline, and credibility through impartial and independent inspections, assessments, inquiries, investigations, teaching, and training. This ensures maintenance of the highest levels of war fighting and mission capabilities throughout the Marine Corps.

The Chief of the Marine Corps Reserve

The Marine Corps Forces Reserve, is a vital part of the Marine Corps Total Force and is organized under the Commander, Marine Corps Forces Reserve. Commander, Marine Corps Forces Reserves provides Select Marine Corps Reserve units and individual augmentees to the active duty Marine Forces when directed by the national command authority through the Commandant of the Marine Corps. If confirmed as the Commandant of the Marine Corps, it will be my responsibility to ensure the highest state of readiness of equipment and personnel to support the Commander, Marine Corps Forces Reserve to support the manning, equipping, training, and deployment of the Marine Corps Total Force.

The Chiefs of Staff of the Army and Air Force

The Chiefs of Staff of the Army and Air Force organize, train, and equip their respective forces. Combatant Commanders cannot ensure preparedness of their assigned forces without the full cooperation and support of the Service Chiefs. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Service Chiefs are obligated to provide military advice. The experience and judgment of the Service Chiefs provide an invaluable resource for the Combatant Commanders and the national command authority. If confirmed, I will continue the close relationship between the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Service Chiefs.

The Chief, National Guard Bureau

The Chief of the National Guard Bureau organizes, trains, and equips the Army National Guard and Air National Guard. Combatant Commanders cannot ensure preparedness of their assigned forces without the full cooperation and support of the Service Chiefs. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau is obligated to provide military advice with respect to the effective employment of the National Guard in support of global interest. If confirmed, I will continue the close relationship between the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau.

The Combatant Commanders

The Combatant Commanders are responsible to the President and to the Secretary of Defense for the performance of missions assigned by the President or by the Secretary with the approval of the President. Subject to the direction of the President, the commander of a combatant command performs duties under the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense; and is directly responsible to the Secretary for the preparedness of the command to carry out missions assigned to the command. Pursuant to title 10, the Commandant of the Marine Corps is responsible for organizing, training, and equipping forces in support of Combatant Commander Requirements. Specifically, the Commandant is required to provide Service specific and joint capabilities required by Combatant Commanders to perform their missions. Today's security environment dictates that the

USMC work closely with the Combatant Commanders to execute our national military strategy.

The Marine Component Commanders of the Combatant Commands

The Marine Component Commanders of the Combatant Commands are responsible to advise the Combatant Commanders on the proper employment of Marine Corps Forces assigned. The role of the Commandant of the Marine Corps is to ensure Marine Corps operational forces assigned are organized, trained and equipped to execute the roles and responsibilities of the Combatant Commands and their operational commanders.

Major Challenges and Priorities

What is your vision for the Marine Corps of today? For the Marine Corps of the future?

The Marine Corps is manned, trained, and equipped to be the world's premier naval expeditionary force. The Marines Corps is ready to respond to crisis and conflict across the full range of military operations in every clime and place. The Marine Corps must adapt to a changing operating environment in order to remain "First to Fight."

What do you consider to be the most significant challenges you will face if confirmed as the Commandant of the Marine Corps?

Among the most significant challenges I will face as the Commandant if confirmed will be to sustain readiness at high levels for our operating forces while concurrently modernizing the force - under constrained resource limits.

What plans do you have for addressing each of these challenges, if confirmed?

We will need to conduct a deliberate redesign of the force to meet the needs of the future operating environment. We will also need to divest of our legacy equipment and legacy programs and also consider potential end strength reductions in order to invest in equipment modernization and necessary training upgrades.

Given the major challenges you identified above, what other priorities would you set for your term as Commandant of the Marine Corps, if confirmed?

First and foremost is to recruit and retain the very best Marines, and return them to society as better citizens. We must continue to diversify our ranks in every facet and provide 21st century level training for Marines and world-class care for Marines and their families. In all that we do as Marines, we must maintain the highest standards of professionalism and ethical behavior, dignity, and respect, holding true to our core values – Honor, Courage, and Commitment.

If confirmed, what actions would you take to focus Marine Corps efforts on each of these priorities?

If confirmed, I would publish clear, concise guidance to the force and then travel to as many locations as possible to discuss my priorities with Marines across the globe. In my guidance to the staff at Headquarters, Marine Corps, I would need to clearly articulate priorities and reinforce that we must be willing to accept risk in some areas in order to accelerate and sustain progress in others.

2018 National Defense Strategy

The 2018 NDS moved beyond the “two-war construct” that has guided defense strategy, capability development, and investment for the past three decades, and refocused DOD on a “2 + 3 framework”. That framework prioritizes “great power competition and conflict” with China and Russia as the primary challenges with which the United States must contend, together with the imperative of deterring and countering rogue regimes like North Korea and Iran. Finally the framework emphasizes the defeat of terrorist threats to the U.S. and the consolidation of gains in Iraq and Afghanistan, while moving to a “more resource sustainable” approach to counterterrorism.

In your view, does the 2018 NDS accurately assess the current strategic environment? Please explain your answer.

Yes it does. Both Russia and China intend to supplant the U.S. as the security partner of choice, and impart their priorities regionally and beyond. Both nations have significantly increased their investments in warfighting capabilities over the past decade and have acted coercively on neighboring countries to achieve their objectives. In most cases, these nations are not engaging in open acts of hostility but they are certainly not cooperating peacefully. North Korea and Iran remain military threats to regional stability, albeit with different objectives and methods. Violent extremist organizations continue to adapt and spread as a transnational threat we will continue to face. Great power competition is the defining national security challenge of our age, and require forward-deployed naval forces that can compete against, deter, and if necessary defeat peer adversaries.

Does the 2018 NDS properly focus the United States on preparing to compete, deter, and win against the range of threats it identifies? Please explain your answer.

Yes it does. Strategically our goal is to win before fighting – to conventionally deter our competitors from taking actions that destabilize security frameworks and threaten our national interests. The joint force, however, must be capable of transitioning immediately to a crisis or conflict, should an adversary not be deterred by our actions. Because we cannot predict the nature of that conflict or crisis, we must be prepared to handle any threat, anywhere, anytime.

In your view, does the 2018 NDS specify the correct set of capabilities by which the United States can achieve its security objectives in the face of ongoing competition and potential military conflict with China and Russia? What do you perceive as the areas of highest risk?

Yes, I believe the 2018 NDS lists appropriate categories of capabilities the joint force must have, without being overly prescriptive. Among areas of highest risk to our forces are cyber threats, threats to space-based assets, and large numbers of adversary surface-to-surface long-range weapons. We must maintain a naval power projection capability that is expeditionary and sustainable.

Is the Marine Corps adequately sized, structured, and resourced to implement the 2018 NDS and the associated operational plans? Please explain your answer.

No, the Marine Corps today is not sized, structured, and resourced to meet all of the requirements laid out in the 2018 NDS. The Marine Corps needs to conduct a Force Design effort to assess what changes to our current end strength and force structure would be required to meet the future operating environment. That effort would consider Global Force Management tasks, OPLAN requirements, and a sustainable operations tempo. The NDS focuses heavily on modernization, and modernization comes with a significant price tag. If confirmed, I will work with Congress to communicate the investments the Marine Corps is making and the purpose of those investments.

If confirmed, how will you address any gaps or shortfalls in the ability of the Marine Corps to meet the demands placed on it by the 2018 NDS and the operational plans that implement the strategy?

The NDS forces us to establish strategic priorities and make difficult choices – which will mean doing less in certain areas so we can do more in others. For Marine Corps capabilities and our structure, if confirmed, I will conduct a Force Design effort to assess what changes to our current end strength and force structure would be required to meet the future operating environment. That effort would consider Global Force Management tasks, OPLAN requirements, and a sustainable operations tempo.

If confirmed, what changes or adjustments would you advise the Secretary of the Navy to make in the Marine Corps' implementation of the 2018 NDS?

We must continue to aggressively pursue naval integration. Within that imperative, we must consider the implications of the NDS, enemy threat(s), the impact of the rate of technological change, and the capabilities of the individual Marine. After considering all of these factors, if confirmed, I will then implement a force design that meets the strategy, leverages technology and outpaces the threat.

Does the Marine Corps have the requisite analytic capabilities and tools to support you, if confirmed as the Commandant of the Marine Corps, in developing and implementing the force structure, sizing, and shaping plans required to position the Corps to execute the operational plans associated with the 2018 NDS? Please explain your answer.

We do have the organic analytic capabilities within the Marine Corps to support a Force Design effort – and that capability is critical. We may consider augmenting that with additional analytic capability either to speed up the assessment or to gain an external perspective.

Overall Readiness of the Marine Corps

How would you assess the current readiness of the Marine Corps—across the domains of materiel and equipment, personnel, and training—to execute the 2018 NDS and associated operational plans?

The Marine Corps remains the Nation’s force in readiness, but we must modernize to become more lethal, resilient, and capable. Readiness is the product of the ability of the force to execute its mission with ready people, ready equipment, and the right training against potential adversaries. This requires an additional long-term view of readiness through capability modernization, made possible with predictable, sustained budgets from Congress.

Are the infantry regiments and battalions of the Marine Corps at acceptable levels of readiness? What is the goal across the Corps?

Yes, our deployed infantry battalions and regimental command elements are ready to operate across the range of military operations. For units not currently deployed, full-spectrum readiness of infantry units varies, due to their support of deploying units. The availability of amphibious shipping for training further complicates the attainment of full spectrum readiness for all infantry units.

Are units that provide key enabling support (i.e., armored reconnaissance, tank, artillery, engineers, and logistics) at acceptable levels of readiness?

Yes, our forward deployed and forward engaged key enabling support units are ready to operate across the range of military operations. The full spectrum readiness among home station units vary, due to their balancing the demands of providing ready detachments to task organized forces for worldwide employment against the requirement to generate whole unit capabilities for core missions. The availability of amphibious shipping for training further complicates the attainment of full spectrum readiness for these units.

What is the level of readiness in the fixed and rotary winged squadrons and wings? Is this adequate?

A detailed accounting of our current readiness levels of fixed wing and rotary wing squadrons requires a higher classification level. Stable funding from Congress over the past three years allowed sizeable gains to our aviation readiness levels, measured through our mission capable rates and hours flown in the aircraft by our pilots. This not only impacts our ability to prepare for tomorrow's fight, but more importantly prepares our "ready bench" force the capability to fight at a moment's notice.

In your view, what are the priority missions for which current and future Marine Corps forces should be trained and ready in the context of day-to-day activities, as well as for contingencies?

As the Nation's force in readiness, the Marine Corps must train and be ready for the broad range of military operations (ROMO), from humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to high-end conflict with a peer adversary – both now and in the future. To ensure readiness across the ROMO, for competition and wartime requirements, units must continue to train for both core and assigned missions.

In what specific ways has the Marine Corps utilized its increased budgetary authority over the past two years to foster readiness recovery across the domains of materiel and equipment, personnel, and training?

Congress has greatly assisted Marine Corps readiness recovery efforts with an increased topline in FY18 and FY19, allowing us to continue efforts to rebuild readiness and increase lethality in support of the National Defense Strategy. We have been able to address our most acute readiness issues which are found in our aviation units. We have accelerated aviation readiness recovery, which has led to an increase in overall flying hours, an increase in average monthly flight time for our aircrew, an increase in mission capable rates of our aircraft, and an improvement of our aggregate aviation Training-Rating. This has put us on track to achieve the TACAIR mission capable rate of 80% by the end of FY19 and the overall required number of mission capable aircraft to preform operational requirements and reconstitute our ready bench by FY21. We have made significant gains in ground equipment readiness rates, where our Aggregated Ground Equipment and Readiness of Reportable Equipment is approximately 92% Availability and 94% Serviceability. This has given the Marine Corps the ability to meet mission requirements, as well as reset 99% of our ground equipment, with 72% returned to the Operating Forces and strategic equipment programs. Additionally, we have increased active duty end strength by 4,100 Marines to 186.1K. This has led to enhancements in capacity and capability necessary to meet the requirements of the evolving operational environment to include cyber, information operations, intelligence and MARSOC. Finally, we have invested in Service-level, Joint, and Multilateral training exercises and enhancements to training ranges and live immersion training capabilities to train as we fight and continue to ensure the Marine Corps is "most ready when the Nation is least ready."

The discretionary caps imposed by the Budget Control Act (BCA) will be in effect for FYs 2020 and 2021. Absent a budget agreement, the Department will not receive adequate or on-time funding. Continuing resolutions are likely and sequestration remains a possibility.

If confirmed, what would you do to restore full spectrum Marine Corps readiness, and under what timelines?

Increased, predictable budgetary authority over the past two years has enabled the Marine Corps to recruit and retain the highest quality people possible, which directly contributes to lethality and readiness. We have been able to significantly improve spare parts availability, training munitions, and opportunities for advanced skills and high-end unit training. Additionally, we have been able to accelerate modernization, with a corresponding improvement to materiel readiness.

If confirmed, I will emphasize naval integration and adequately resource realistic, high-end training to achieve the readiness goals outlined in the 2018 NDS.

If confirmed, how would you oversee compliance by the Marine Corps with your timelines to ensure that readiness goals are met?

Today our Marines are operating forward around the globe performing the mission of America's expeditionary force-in-readiness. If confirmed, I will ensure those Marines deployed and those next to respond have the resources and training they need to be successful. I will conduct periodic, detailed readiness reviews across the force to ensure that I am aware of what our operating force commander need to build and sustain readiness. I will hold commanders accountable for meeting readiness objectives.

Does the Marine Corps have the requisite analytic capabilities and tools to support you, if confirmed as the Commandant of the Marine Corps, in measuring readiness to execute the broad range of potential Marine Corps missions—from low-intensity, gray-zone conflicts to protracted high intensity fights—envisioned by 2018 NDS and associated operational plans? Please explain your answer.

Yes, I believe the Marine Corps has sufficient analytic capability to measure readiness across the spectrum of operations. Our capabilities and tools are evolutionary, so we can exploit emerging technologies, increase the speed of analysis, continuously improve quality, and reduce the workload on the operating forces. These decision support tools increase our ability to make informed decisions faster than our competitors. If confirmed, I will continue to support this evolutionary process to improve the velocity and quality of our decision making.

Given the current operational tempo is the Corps able to maintain desired dwell ratios for both ground and air units?

The Marine Corps will not be able to fully recover and sustain required readiness levels for all type units, given the current operational tempo. Today, many of our unit types are at an

unsustainable deployment-to-dwell ratio that does not allow enough time to build proper team cohesion and train for all mission essential tasks.

To the extent the Marine Corps has functions that overlap with those of other DOD Components, what would be your approach, if confirmed, to consolidating and reducing those redundancies?

Some redundancy within our military is not only acceptable – it is essential for combat effectiveness as a joint force. Combat is unpredictable and tests resilience of the force. Redundant capabilities can be a hedge against a single point of failure that will quickly attract the attention of a thinking enemy. That said, one of the strengths of the Joint Force is the ability to leverage the respective strengths of its constituent parts.

As a Service component commander at Marine Forces, Pacific I dealt with this in the context of current operations and readiness. We achieve synergy in current operations, through Joint planning. Our Joint planning processes are quite mature, and are purpose-built to accomplish the kind of consolidation of redundancies that we need. We tend to conduct operational planning in a very collaborative fashion.

If confirmed, I would focus primarily on the broad range of naval expeditionary requirements, within the larger context of joint requirements. For functions that the Marine Corps and another DoD component(s) provide I would assess whether or not the function is a core function of the Marine Corps, and how much redundancy is affordable, sustainable, and necessary for the joint force.

National Security Budget Reductions/Sequestration

The discretionary caps imposed by the Budget Control Act (BCA) will be in effect for FYs 2020 and 2021. Absent a budget agreement, the Department will not receive adequate or on-time funding. Continuing resolutions are likely and sequestration remains a possibility.

How does this budget uncertainty affect the Marine Corps, in your view?

As the Marine Corps invests in new warfighting capabilities to implement the National Defense Strategy, continued budget uncertainty negatively impacts our ability to modernize, resulting in reduced readiness and exposing our forces to greater risks on future battlefields. Budget certainty enables partnership with industry and investment in the technologies required to win in the future operating environment, including advanced communications operable in satellite-degraded environments, 5th generation aircraft, long-range precision fires, air defense, unmanned systems, additive manufacturing and artificial intelligence.

In your assessment, what would be the effects of continued application of the BCA discretionary caps through 2021 on the Marine Corps? What would be the specific implications for the Marine Corps implementation of the 2018 NDS?

Continued application of the BCA discretionary caps would force us to prioritize near-term readiness at the expense of equipment modernization, infrastructure sustainment, and end strength. It would limit the readiness recovery gains achieved over the past two years; impede modernizing for the future force through reductions across ground and aviation programs; hinder critical MOS force shaping, incentive-based recruiting and disrupt retention efforts; degrade active and reserve component training; and decrement foundational efforts, including our Infrastructure Reset Strategy at a time we are addressing hurricane recovery efforts.

The President's Budget for FY 2020 requests \$576 Billion in base DOD funding, coupled with \$174 Billion in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO). Together, the proposed base and OCO request reflect a total budgetary increase of less than 3% in *real growth* over the FY 2019 defense budget. In its 2018 report, the National Defense Strategy Commission—supported by then-Secretary of Defense Mattis and Chairman Dunford—recommended that Congress increase the base defense budget at an average rate of three to five percent above inflation through the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP).

Do you believe that the Marine Corps requires 3-5% real budgetary growth through the FYDP in order to implement effectively the 2018 NDS? Please explain your answer.

Yes. To implement the National Defense Strategy effectively, we require the most modern, technologically advanced, capable Marine Corps our resourcing will allow. Despite notable improvement in readiness during the past two year years, the preceding seventeen years of war have perilously degraded our overall capability and capacity, as those of our adversaries have increased. We must increase the lethality of our Force in order to compete with our threats, deter our adversaries, assure our allies, and prevail in any fight. To achieve this end, the Marine Corps must evolve from today's "1.0" force capable of addressing our current warfighting needs; to a near-term "1.1" modernized force that leverages select, existing platforms to achieve new warfighting concepts; to a "2.0" future force with revolutionized capabilities and the ability to execute new warfighting concepts.

At proposed FY 2020 funding levels, is the Marine Corps adequately funded to fight one major power rival, while maintaining deterrence and stability in other regions of the world? Please explain your answer.

Yes. As the Nation's naval expeditionary force-in-readiness, the Marine Corps is increasing lethality and evolving our force through prioritized investment in modernization, readiness, and manpower. This evolution is necessary to ensure we maintain current operational readiness to address whatever contingencies may arise today, and anticipate what our force of tomorrow must look like to be capable of addressing unforeseen threats in accordance with the National Defense Strategy. However, to accomplish this goal, adequate, sustained, and predictable funding at acceptable levels of real growth, is required to properly plan for and resource a lethal, adaptive, and resilient Corps that can dominate all warfighting domains and that is ready to fight tonight and win. The ability to fight and win in major combat

operations in one theater, while maintaining deterrence in others, will become more challenging over time if the global security environment continues to increase in levels of complexity. An absence of this funding stability combined with a sustained high level of operations will challenge our ability to implement the National Defense Strategy.

Is the proposed FY 2020 Marine Corps budget adequate to execute operations, maintain readiness, procure needed weapons and equipment, modernize capabilities, and sustain Marine and family quality of life? Please explain your answer.

Yes. The FY20 budget request directly aligns with the Secretary of Defense's guidance to increase lethality, improve warfighting readiness, and achieve program balance, building on the momentum gained over the previous year and seeking to further adapt and modernize our Corps. It maintains programs of record for all major acquisition programs; funds aviation readiness to train the fleet to T2.0 standards and achieve "Ready Bench" by FY21; funds key levels of the Infrastructure Reset Strategy to optimize our infrastructure footprint; strengthens innovation and experimentation; sustains the Info-Pacific Force Posture Initiative; prioritizes close combat investments; and continues Joint/Naval Force Integration. However, I'm concerned about our ability to compete with China and Russia in the face of their emerging technological capabilities given the increasing cost of our emerging technologies that are so critical to our ability to build the future force necessary to deter, fight and win. The cost of these revolutionized capabilities, the ability to address the needs of our challenged infrastructure, our rebalance to the Pacific, and the requirements to support distributed steady-state operations around the globe will require adequate, sustained, and predictable funding at acceptable levels of real growth, to continue to properly plan for and resource a ready, capable, and lethal force.

If confirmed, by what standards would you measure the adequacy of Marine Corps funding going forward?

The Marine Corps is committed to building the most ready naval expeditionary force the Nation can afford and adequate, sustained, and predictable funding is needed to properly plan for and resource a ready, capable, lethal force. Readiness, however, is the product of two metrics that require both adequate resources and time. The first is the ability of the force to execute its mission with ready people, ready equipment, and the right training. The second compares the force against potential adversaries, the importance of which grows dramatically in an environment of rising peers and global competition. If confirmed, I will be taking a deliberate approach to continue the positive trends in our overall readiness while simultaneously balancing the need to modernize our current force, satisfying existing Combatant Commander demands, and building the force required by the strategic environment to remain relevant in the future.

Should OCO funding not be available, what impact would a \$576 Billion budget have on Marine Corps readiness, in your view?

A reduced topline would cause significant disruption to readiness and modernization initiatives across the Marine Corps, as well as operational commitments. It would limit the readiness recovery gains achieved over the past two years; impede modernizing for the future force through reductions across ground and aviation programs; hinder critical MOS force shaping, incentive-based recruiting and disrupt retention efforts; degrade active and reserve component training; and decrement foundational efforts, including our Infrastructure Reset Strategy at a time we are addressing crucial hurricane recovery efforts. Overall, funding at this level combined with a sustained high level of operations will challenge our future ability to be the Nation's expeditionary force-in-readiness and to implement the National Defense Strategy.

Should OCO funding not be available, what recommendations would you make for cuts to Marine Corps operations and programs in FY 2020?

I would be forced to make the difficult decisions concerning operations, modernization, infrastructure, and manpower accounts to prioritize our near-term readiness. These consideration may degrade our response to a major contingency today and adversely affect our ability to build a ready force for tomorrow. Such decisions may result in reduced military end strength; delayed major acquisition programs such as the JSF, CH-53K, ACV, and JLTV and the canceling of others; deferring/canceling facility and equipment maintenance for both ground and aviation units; eliminating training opportunities for non-deployed units that make up our "Ready Bench"; and reducing/eliminating morale and family support services.

Section 222a of title 10, U.S. Code provides that not later than 10 days after the President's submission of the defense budget to Congress, each Service Chief and Combatant Commander shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report that lists, in order of priority, the unfunded priorities of the armed force or combatant command.

If confirmed, do you agree to provide your unfunded priorities list to Congress in a timely manner, beginning with the FY 2021 budget request?

Yes.

Alliances and Partnerships

Mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships are crucial to U.S. success in competition and conflict against a great power. To this end, the 2018 NDS envisions the expansion of regional consultative mechanisms and collaborative planning and proposes to deepen interoperability of operational concepts, modular force elements, communications, information sharing, and equipment. Interactions between the marine and naval forces of different countries are often conducted at the Chief of Service-level, including in international exercises, Foreign Military Sales, educational exchanges, and establishing protocols for operations.

If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to build strong international partnerships, overcome challenges to same, and exploit opportunities in international cooperation?

My last two years of service as Commander, U.S. Marine Forces, Pacific highlighted for me the critical nature of partnerships and alliances, and the importance of understanding and supporting the regional engagement priorities of the combatant commander. If confirmed, I will actively seek to expand and strengthen international partnerships using the office of the Commandant of the Marine Corps and also through our Marine Corps component commanders. Engagement opportunities range from personal travel to hosting counterpart visits to the U.S. The relatively smaller size of the Marine Corps and unique amphibious and naval expeditionary nature help make the Corps an easy partner to work with.

How would you characterize your familiarity with international Marine and Navy leaders, forums, and processes?

If confirmed, I bring 38 years of experience deploying with and serving alongside international Marine and Navy forces, and their leaders. As the Commander of Marine Forces Pacific for the past two years, I became very familiar with international Marine and Naval Infantry leaders, as well as leaders of other international allies and partners who share similar mission sets. Enduring relationships, forged in challenging operational environments, afford the Marine Corps opportunities to enhance cooperation through exercises, training, personnel exchanges, and key leader engagements. If confirmed, I will continue to build and reinforce relationships that help us cooperatively address shared security challenges.

Support to the State Department

The Accountability Review Board for Benghazi supported the “State Department’s initiative to request additional Marines and expand the Marine Security Guard (MSG) Program—as well as corresponding requirements for staffing and funding.” The Board also recommended that the “State Department and DOD identify additional flexible MSG structures and request further resources for the Department and DOD to provide more capacity and capability at higher risk posts.”

Has the MSG Program, including staffing and funding, been enhanced consistent with the recommendations of the Benghazi report? If so, how? If not, why not?

Yes. Adequate staffing and funding for the program remains a high priority for the Marine Corps. Since Benghazi, the MSG program has grown from 152 detachments to 181 detachments at U.S. diplomatic missions in 150 countries. MSGs continue support the Department of State in the protection of personnel, classified material and US property. Since the inception of the MSG Security Augmentation Unit (MSAU) in July 2013, MCESG now has a more capable ability to augment security at embassies and consulates when threats have increased during pre and post crisis periods.

If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to ensure the appropriate relationships and agreements between DOD, the Marine Corps, and the State Department to ensure the safety and security of U.S. Embassies and other high-risk posts abroad?

The relationships between the DOD, the Marine Corps and the State Department continue to be of great importance. In addition to the MSGs, the Marine Corps also has the ability to field the MEUs, Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force-Crisis Response (SPMAGTF-CR), Fleet Antiterrorism Support Teams (FAST) and other Marine Corps forces to ensure the safety and security of U.S. diplomatic facilities abroad. By the end of calendar year 2019, the number of MSG detachments assigned to posts is expected to grow to 184, with 3 additional detachments projected to be activated from 2019 to 2020. During the last 12 months (April 18-March 19) MSG detachments stationed around the world have responded to 232 incidents. The MSAU has deployed for a total of 45 missions; 17 for security augmentation and 28 VIP security support to POTUS, VPOTUS and SECSTATE.

Close Combat Lethality Task Force

In February 2018, the Secretary of Defense established the Close Combat Lethality Task Force (CCLTF)—a cross-functional task force charged to “strengthen the . . . lethality, survivability, resiliency, and readiness” of U.S. squad-level infantry formations to “ensure close combat overmatch against pacing threats.”

Will you commit that, if you are confirmed, the Marine Corps will continue to support the CCLTF, ensuring that it is properly resourced for mission accomplishment?

If confirmed, I would continue the Corps’ support for the CCLTF. The Marine Corps remains fully committed to increasing the lethality and readiness of our close combat formations. I will ensure the Marine Corps continues to work closely with the CCLTF as they implement the Secretary of Defense’s intent. The increased resources provided over the last two years helped us improve readiness at the squad level.

What is your view of the value of the CCLTF in advancing the Department’s implementation of the 2018 NDS?

I believe the CCLTF has shown significant value by contributing directly to the NDS’ emphasis on close combat lethality and readiness. The CCLTF’s lines of effort are focused on long-term infantry lethality and will benefit the Marine Corps greatly as we prepare to meet our pacing threats.

In your view, how might military personnel policies be modified better to facilitate desirable leadership expertise and continuity in infantry squads?

In simple terms we must retain the very best leaders at the squad level and provide world-class training for squads. We will continue to look at manpower policies that ensure our infantry squads are staffed with the most qualified and experienced leaders possible. This is an area where we cannot accept risk and the Marine Corps continues to improve in this area. We will continue to work with the CCLTF to review manpower personnel policy modifications that support infantry unit cohesion, stabilization, readiness and lethality.

Do you believe that cross functional teams, like the CCLTF, are an effective means of achieving critical DOD objectives? If so, what other issues under the purview of the Marine Corps should be tackled by a cross functional team?

Yes. Organizing other activities under similar constructs may add value; however, full consideration should be given to how to balance requirements, risk and Service equities. Cross functional teams may be most useful where there needs to be a high level of interoperability or where there are significant equities related to Joint capabilities.

Section 804 of the FY 2016 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) authorized DOD to employ an acquisition approach that enables the rapid delivery of new capability to meet emerging operational needs. In FY 2018, based in part on advocacy by the CCLTF, this Committee approved the reprogramming of \$648 million to fund the section 804 rapid prototyping and fielding of Integrated Visual Augmentation System (IVAS) technology that will provide infantry squads an ultra-realistic synthetic environment in which to train, as well as enhanced situational awareness in combat.

When do you expect the IVAS prototype to be fielded to Marine Corps infantry squads?

Marines are participating alongside Soldiers in the assessment and evaluation of prototypes in this Army-led program and are providing warfighter feedback which is key to the rapid development of this innovative capability. Contingent on prototype performance and based on the current program schedule, we plan to begin procurement in fiscal year 2022 when it is scheduled by the Army to go into production.

In your view, how will CCLTF work across the Human Performance line of effort contribute to the performance and survivability of Marine Corps infantry squads?

As the technology and science behind many of the areas mature, this CCLTF line of effort will help improve our training and techniques, better identify injuries and accelerate recovery, improve the cognitive output of our Marines and ultimately improve lethality and readiness.

What other close combat initiatives under development by the Marine Corps have been accelerated by CCLTF assessment and validation?

The Marine Corps has benefitted greatly from CCLTF's efforts to orchestrate OSD-level reprogramming in support of Service initiatives. The best example is the acceleration of our efforts to modernize our infantry night vision devices through the fielding of the AN/PVS-31

binocular night vision device with enhanced, clip-on thermal imager. Additionally, the CCLTF supported the Marine Corps' effort to procure the M3E1 Multi-Role Anti-Armor Anti-Personnel Weapons System (MAAWS), 84mm rocket. These two initiatives are examples of significant lethality and modernization enhancements for our infantry formations.

Joint Operations

Expeditionary operations are becoming increasingly joint as Marines plan to deploy in larger numbers, on a wider range of ships, and to more forward locations; the U.S. Army and Air Force invest in counter-maritime capabilities; and both air and naval forces continue to develop and implement capabilities to defeat anti-access and area denial (A2/AD) networks.

How would you characterize the current state of Navy and Marine Corps joint operations? What gaps or shortfalls exist? What changes would you advocate to strengthen or expand Navy and Marine Corps joint operations best to meet the objectives of the 2018 NDS?

The current state of Navy and Marine Corps joint operations is strong – and getting stronger. The ARG/MEU team remains world-class, a proven and flexible joint-interoperable force. As the Navy increases its focus on warfighting at the numbered fleet level, the Marine Corps has concurrently increased our focus on MEF-level operations within an expeditionary naval force.

Two critical gaps limiting our ability to operate as a fully integrated naval force are: (1) adequate number of ready and capable amphibious warships; and (2) a family of modern surface connectors that will enable the naval force to operate in a more distributed manner. The SECNAV, CNO, and my predecessor have been very clear on the priority of the surface navy readiness and the need for a corresponding connector capability.

Which other Service doctrines and capabilities offer the greatest opportunity for synergy with the Marine Corps in joint operations?

The Marine Corps is naval by nature, and the Marine Corps and Navy are natural partners. The naval expeditionary team of Navy and Marine Corps forces provides a unique and essential warfighting capability to the nation.

As an "all-domain" force, we have opportunities for synergy with each of the other Services. In fact, we partner with the other Services in the development of 33 multi-service doctrinal publications, via the Air-Land-Sea Application Center and we are also partnered with other Services in maintaining another 75 "dual designated" doctrinal publications.

When it comes to achieving synergy in Joint operations, we have two perspectives: dependencies and enablers. In the first instance, we are dependent on our Service partners in many ways. The Army, for example, provides critical theater logistics support, the Air

Force provides strategic airlift, and the Navy, our sister service and closest partner, provides not only amphibious lift, but also an entire range of support for the amphibious and other littoral operations that are our forte.

In terms of enablers, the Marines consider our all-domain role to be a source of almost endless opportunities for synergy with the other Services. Our Marine Air-Ground Task Forces can readily interoperate with Army forces on the ground, we contribute sorties to the Joint Force Air Component Commander, we can interoperate with Special Operations Forces, and, of course, we can form an integral part of the Joint Force Maritime Component Commander's toolkit. Our Marines are extremely adept at operating with our Service partners, and we seek to do so at every opportunity.

What innovative ideas are you considering to increase Service interdependence and interoperability to accomplish missions and tasks in support of DOD objectives in joint operations?

Although we consider the Marine Corps the most inherently "joint" of our Services, our approach to interdependence and interoperability starts with the Navy. We share common operational concepts, but have work to do in command, control, communication, computer, intelligence (C4I) systems and other areas. The primary focus will be to ensure that our networks seamlessly interoperate with our Navy counterparts.

Interoperability extends beyond our US Joint partners and into our relationship with partner nations. As we field new systems like the CH-53K, JLTV, ACV and future unmanned systems we will continue to experiment with our partner nations to ensure that we can leverage additional capabilities within our partner network.

Our thinking about Service interdependence and interoperability begins with our Joint concepts, The Joint Concept for Access and Maneuver in the Global Commons calls for a "distributable, resilient, and tailorable force." Our operating concepts, Littoral Operations in a Contested Environment and Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations, speak to this very notion. They call for distributed lethality, increased number of networked sea- and land-based sensors and shooters, and mobile capabilities in austere forward locations, controlling key maritime terrain. These capabilities will serve as enablers for other components of the Joint Force, by contributing to sea control and denying adversaries freedom of maneuver, while protecting that of friendly forces.

We are also exploring the possibility of trilateral Navy-USMC-SOCOM coordination to assess areas where together we may provide additional capabilities to the joint force.

Joint Acquisition

What are your views regarding the merit and feasibility of joint development and acquisition programs, such as the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle and Future Vertical Lift?

Joint programs typically succeed when the Services involved have each studied their requirements (operational, budgetary, time, etc.) and determined that all elements are well aligned. In general, the Marine Corps and Army worked towards this harmony with the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle program. When the priorities of each Service do not align, there are challenges. One service may prioritize a specific capability in the top ten, another service that needs a similar capability may not prioritize the capability above the “cut line.” Need dates for a capability may not align. One service may require a capability in the next two years, another service may not need that capability for another six-eight years

The argument for joint programs is that they are thought to save life-cycle costs by eliminating duplicate research, development, test, and evaluation (RDT&E) efforts and by achieving economies of scale in procurement and operations and support (O&S), yet the need to accommodate different Service requirements in a single design or common design family can lead to greater program complexity, increased technical risk, and common functionality and weight in excess of what is needed by an individual service. These factors can increase the overall cost, despite the efficiencies gained from a joint approach.

With these considerations in mind, I think that Services should approach Joint programs deliberately to understand if there is an opportunity for jointness before launching into a program that ends up being misaligned with one of more of the Services' requirements.

What additional programs would you consider to be candidates for joint development and acquisition?

I am not aware of any potential candidates for joint development at this time.

Naval Surface Fire Support

The DDG-1000 program was initiated to fill the capability gap for naval surface fire support. The original requirement for 24 to 32 DDG-1000 ships, each with two 155mm Advanced Gun Systems, was reduced to 12 ships, then to 10 ships, then to 7, and finally to 3 ships.

In your view, and given this significant reduction in the number of DDG-1000 destroyers, does the Navy program meet the Marine Corps' requirement for naval surface fire support?

The requirement for naval surface fires remains valid and the Navy-Marine Corps team continues to seek affordable, lethal solutions.

What other capabilities would you rely on to help meet naval surface fire support requirements? Will the Army's programs in Long Range Precision Fires meet the requirements?

The Marine Corps is closely following the Army's efforts in Long Range Precision Fires. The Navy-Marine Corps team continues to seek affordable, lethal solutions to the naval surface fires requirement.

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

Officials of the Department of Defense have advocated for accession by the United States to the Law of the Sea Convention.

Do you support United States accession to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea?

Yes.

How would you respond to critics of the Convention who assert that accession is not in the national security interests of the United States?

As the world's foremost maritime power, U.S. security and broader national interests are intrinsically linked to freedom of navigation. The Convention codifies navigation freedoms in a manner beneficial to naval operations (e.g., freedoms of navigation and overflight, passage rights, traditional uses of the sea), while exempting the military from coastal State laws (e.g., environmental rules and restrictions on military activities). The U.S. military would not be subject to any third party decisions because military activities are exempted from the Convention's dispute resolution processes. Accession would not impose any additional constraints on the U.S. military's ability to fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows.

In your view, what impact, if any, would U.S. accession to the Law of the Sea Convention have on ongoing and emerging maritime disputes such as in the South China Sea and in the Arctic?

Accession would "lock in" the customary rights and freedoms reflected in the Convention, and would give the United States a seat at the table to set the course for future law of the sea discussions on a co-equal level with member states like China and Russia. The law of the sea is continuously being interpreted, applied, and developed. By not being a party, the United States is not on the inside to protect and advance its interests, and risks losing the Convention's benefits the longer it remains a non-party. Failure to join the Convention has required the United States to rely on customary international law as the legal authority to contest excessive maritime claims and activities by other countries inconsistent with the Convention. For example, China continues a more aggressive posture in the South China Sea. As widely reported, Chinese warships, law enforcement vessels, and other PRC-flagged vessels have failed to respect the rights of maritime nations under the Convention. As a party to the Convention, U.S. objections to these violations would have more force and

credibility, and would enhance its ability to respond to excessive maritime claims, land reclamation, and militarization efforts by China in the South China Sea.

Indo-Pacific Region

What are the key areas in which the Marine Corps must improve to provide the necessary capabilities and capacity to the Joint Force to prevail in a potential conflict with China?

We have undertaken a modernization strategy focused on organizing, training, and equipping our Marine Corps to provide combat credible forces that can deter peer competitors and, if necessary, fight and win. This strategy is focused on modernization in a set of key areas that our planning shows to be critical for success:

- C2 in a Degraded Environment
- Long Range Precision Fires
- Information Warfare
- Air Defense
- Protected Mobility/Enhanced Maneuver
- Logistics

We have conducted extensive wargames, experiments, exercises, and formal studies focused on these areas, with special attention to the manner in which Marine Air-Ground Task Forces with these capabilities can contribute to Joint operations. In each of these areas, we have identified requirements and the specific actions necessary to deliver the capabilities. The range of solutions includes development of doctrine, changes to force structure, implementation of new training, and procurement of new equipment. We have ensured that our budget submissions reflect these priorities and that our solution strategies are designed to deliver credible capability, as rapidly as possible.

Do you support the Defense Posture Realignment Initiative (DPRI), including the realignment of some U.S. Marines from Okinawa to Guam and the build-up of facilities at other locations such as MCAS Iwakuni, Japan?

I firmly support our commitments under DPRI. We are committed to honoring those agreements, and are firmly committed to:

- Reduce the number of Marines on Okinawa.
- Move Marines to Guam.
- Return land on Okinawa.
- The Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF).

The 2018 NDS specifically calls out China’s robust anti-access, area denial capabilities (A2/AD) capabilities—including long-range ballistic and cruise missiles, advanced integrated air defenses, electronic warfare, and cyber—and the challenges they pose for U.S. forces.

How would you assess the threat to Marine Corps forces and facilities from Chinese missile forces? Is it fair to say that Marine Corps' forces and facilities in the Indo-Pacific—from Japan to Guam—could face sustained missile attack from the beginning of a contingency? What does this mean for how the Marine Corps will operate? In your assessment, have USMC investments, concepts of operations, and/or posture shifts to date sufficiently addressed this threat?

A more in-depth discussion would need to be at a higher classification level. Survivability of any U.S. facility and U.S. forces within range of an adversary weapon system is a key concern.

Do you believe the planned joint force mix of tactical aircraft is sufficient to counter current and future threats in INDOPACOM, where the “tyranny of distance” is such a major factor?

I believe the planned Marine Corps mix will be sufficient to counter current and anticipated threats.

Do you believe DOD has sufficient sealift and airlift capabilities to move Marines throughout INDOPACOM for both training and contingency purposes?

For sealift and airlift of Marines in the Pacific AOR in support of MCO, a review of any corresponding Time Phased Force Deployment Data (TPFDD) will validate that there isn't enough lift to meet COCOM movement timeline/desires during peak spikes in demand. The current plan to mitigate results in expanded movement windows.

What alternative concepts of operation, platforms, and basing opportunities exist to address potential shortfalls in this area?

We developed a naval view of “How We Fight” to address the threats and challenges we are aligned against. We are using this framework to guide development of the critical capabilities to engage in peer competition, confrontation, and, should deterrence fail, win in conflict through the below lines of effort:

- Line of effort 1: Design a Naval Expeditionary Force
- Line of effort 2: Redesign Forward Basing and Operations
- Line of effort 3: Design Contact Layer and Blunt Layer Forces
- Line of effort 4: Redesign Expeditionary Logistics

Europe

What are the key areas in which the Marine Corps must improve to provide the necessary capabilities and capacity to the Joint Force to prevail in a potential conflict with Russia?

Same basic answer applies to the one we provided for China because capabilities designed for the pacing threat will address all lesser included actors, including Russia.

What is the value of the rotational presence of Marines in Norway? Do you support continuing that presence into the future?

A rotational presence of Marines in Norway helps meet NDS objectives by strategically placing U.S. forces in position to deter Russia; assures NATO allies and partners in the region that the U.S. is invested in our collective security; and facilitates efforts to build relationships with national security partners through our enduring presence, leading to increased interoperability, understanding, and proficiency. The increased readiness of units assigned, coupled with the unique training venues and extreme cold weather environment are important opportunities to consider.

Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command

Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command (MARSOC) was established in February 2006 as a Service component command of U. S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). MARSOC deployed its first units in August 2006, six months after initial activation, and since then, has been continuously deployed.

What is your assessment of the progress made in evolving MARSOC capabilities, particularly throughout the past years of persistent conflict?

Because of its small size and constant operational involvement over the past 13 years since inception, MARSOC has developed into an important force for SOCOM and the Marine Corps. As I stated in recent congressional testimony, MARSOC has come extremely far in the evolution of warfighting capabilities in a relatively short amount of time. From battlefield small unit tactics, techniques, and procedures, to exploring more effective equipment for unmanned aerial systems, precision strike capabilities, advanced communications, small arms capabilities, and intelligence integration at the lowest levels, MARSOC consistently provides forces with a coherent picture of the battlespace and unity of effort against a given problem set. MARSOC has also helped bridge capability development efforts between SOCOM and the Marine Corps.

If confirmed, what would be the principal issues you would have to address to improve MARSOC operations?

One key issue for MARSOC is the structure increase that was originally planned to occur from FY12 to FY16, but was put on hold when the Budget Control Act went into effect. MARSOC is programmed to receive 368 of those structure spaces from FY19 to FY22. If confirmed, this would be an important topic I would need to address. In addition, I would assess ongoing efforts to expand routine integration of certain capabilities not organic to MARSOC, but which potentially could benefit from their placement and access in sensitive

areas. Examples of this would include information warfare, cyber, and expanded intelligence capabilities.

Recapitalization

The Marine Corps intends to concurrently recapitalize several of its front line systems. The MV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft and the Joint Strike Fighter are both in production now.

Do you believe that these production plans are realistic in light of the demands on resources imposed by maintaining current readiness?

Based on my current knowledge of production plans, yes. Our FY20 budget request recognizes we are emerging from a period of resource atrophy that resulted in an erosion of readiness and loss of military advantage. Our pace of procurement for future year deliveries of MV-22s and F-35s is balanced with modernization and readiness efforts to deliver a force that is ready and capable to support naval and joint operations across the adversary continuum against the pacing threat. We are nearly complete with our MV-22 deliveries (326 of 360, with only six MV-22 aircraft remaining outside of the MYP III (FY18-FY22)). We are beginning to ramp up deliveries across the FYDP for the F-35 – with 73 delivered to date – in order to meet transition timelines and modernize legacy TACAIR capabilities.

Is it your understanding that MV-22 readiness rates in Iraq, Afghanistan, and in the United States have achieved desired levels? Do you believe the Common Configuration Reliability and Maintainability program will increase overall readiness?

I believe that MV-22 readiness rates of deployed units currently meet mission requirements. Current FY19 SPMAGTF readiness rates through March are 75 percent mission capable, and FY19 MEU readiness rates through March are at 74 percent mission capable. However, in order to make this happen, our Fleet Activity Designator (FAD) III CONUS based units sit at a degraded state of readiness – with stateside FAD III units maintaining 50 percent mission capable rates. Consequently, fleet wide MV-22 readiness had stagnated at 52 percent mission capable.

In order to maintain overall fleet readiness at acceptable levels, we need to achieve a minimum of 65 percent mission capable rates across the fleet. Getting there will require both planned Nacelle Improvements and completion of Common Configuration-Readiness and Modernization efforts.

In your view, will the MV-22 be sustainable over time at an acceptable cost?

Yes. Based on my combat experience in both Iraq and Afghanistan, no other aircraft in the world can match the unique capabilities of the MV-22. It has revolutionized the way we operate and influences the future modernization efforts for other Marine aviation platforms.

We continue to work with our industry partners to identify ways to drive cost out of the MV-22 sustainment program.

F-35B Requirements

The Marine Corps has stated that its F-35B requirement is 420 aircraft. The total number of F-35s planned for the Department of the Navy is currently set at 680.

Do you believe that the current plan for 680 aircraft can fully accommodate the needs of both the Navy and the Marine Corps?

I believe that the current plan for 680 aircraft can fully accommodate the needs of both the Navy and the Marine Corps. For the Marine Corps, I believe 420 is the right number for today, based on our ongoing analysis. It will allow us to fill our warfighting roles and support the requirements of our Combatant Commanders. We fight as a Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) and that requires that we achieve the right balance of aviation and ground assets. To build our MAGTFs, we continuously evaluate our Programs of Record to validate that we are buying the right capability at the right capacity and cost. We primarily look at it in terms of warfighting requirements in support of the National Defense Strategy, but also factor in our commitments in terms of Global Force Management and training.

The F-35B brings new capabilities and operational possibilities to the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). You have discussed your vision of linking MEUs more closely into the joint force. However, such new capabilities and operating concepts require investment in shipboard infrastructure, including upgraded data links.

What is your vision for L-class ship connectivity? What are your current plans to achieve that vision?

Our endstate is that all amphibious ships have the capability to downlink and share F-35 data. The Navy has already installed on several amphibious ships the new Capstone Ship Self Defense System (SSDS), which brings the Cooperative Engagement Capability (CEC) and Link-16 to the platform. Five Landing Helicopter Docks (LHDs) are scheduled for similar upgrades over the next five years. This system provides a critical combat capability which will integrate with F-35s over Link-16.

We have fielded a system on select amphibious ships that enables post flight data from the F-35 to be disseminated to warfighters and analysts at a lower classification level. We have also began to install Marine Corps Common Aviation Command and Control System (CAC2S) on amphibious ships. This is a new capability being used by USMC tactical air defense controllers and air control electronics operators. CAC2S enables aircraft to become a forward sensor for the command elements embarked on Marine Expeditionary Units/Amphibious Ready Groups (MEUs/ARGs), providing greater situational awareness and faster decision making.

Follow-on modernization for the F-35 is scheduled to bring key warfighting capabilities to the fleet, but the schedule and budget remain in flux.

Are you concerned about the affordability and executability of the Department's plan for Block 4 Continuous Capability Development and Delivery (C2D2)?

I am always concerned about affordability and executability; Block 4 is no exception. We have balanced our funding accounts to ensure that the Block 4 requirement is covered within our accounts. While it is true that we are seeing some capabilities slide right, the implementation of the 6-month iteration of capabilities in the C2D2 construct has pulled many capabilities left. Overall, we approve the adjustment of the C2D2 acquisition model in order to achieve overmatch with the pacing threat.

How many of the current Marine Corps F-35Bs will not be upgraded to Block 4?

Specific configuration plans are better handled at a higher classification level.

There has been much discussion about the importance of networking and connecting all Navy and Marine Corps capabilities across air, land, and sea platforms.

What is the Navy/Marine Corps team doing to make machine-to-machine command and control, across multiple domains, a reality?

The Marine Corps and Navy are modernizing and expanding networking capabilities in a coordinated effort. This requires expansion of existing capabilities like CAC2S, but also developmental efforts that will provide airborne and surface fusion of sensor feeds and dissemination to naval units in a protected manner.

Have the Navy and Marine Corps developed and refined the joint operational concepts that will govern this integrated fight?

To support the integrated fight there is a standing Naval Tactical Grid working group between Marine Corps and Navy subject matter experts (SME's) to align joint operational concepts, identify current gaps, and develop appropriate modernization efforts to support operational requirements.

What is being done to ensure that the Navy and Marine Corps airborne data links are interoperable and resilient against peer competitors—not only with each other—but with the Air Force and Army platforms as well?

Currently, there are a multiple efforts across the services seeking to identify datalinks and fusion platforms that will ensure interoperability and resiliency of the future joint force that we think will yield a net positive for the warfighter. When facing peer adversaries, we anticipate

that an adversary will prioritize attacks on our network, which dictates that our systems be both protected and resilient.

Current technologies allow “low probability of intercept/low probability of detection” datalinks to connect 4th and 5th generation aircraft. As well, other platforms, operating across multiple domains can be networked.

Who is leading this effort for the Navy, the Marine Corps, and across the joint force, and what progress is being made?

All of the Services are exploring pathways to ensure interoperability and information exchange requirements. These efforts are tied to unique Service funding lines and priorities. The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program Office (JPO) is quickly becoming a touchpoint for the Services to collaborate datalink efforts, identify interoperability requirements, and share funding resources. Largely, the U.S. Air Force (USAF) protects interoperability within the air domain and the U.S. Navy (USN) protects interoperability within the sea domain, though all Services are coordinating efforts.

CH-53

The CH-53K testing is behind schedule and over budget, requiring an additional \$158M in funding to continue testing this FY. In addition, the development program has significant deficiencies that must be corrected before testing can be finished.

What is your assessment of the current status of the CH-53K program? Does it remain on track to achieve initial operational capability and meet the proposed deployment timeline?

The CH-53K program continues to conduct developmental testing and is currently on track to meet Initial Operational Capability (IOC) requirements along with a vertical-lift deployment capability by FY24. I anticipate that technical discrepancy findings will be resolved and funded within agreements reached between the Department of the Navy and the vendor.

What is the effect of CH-53K delays on the CH-53E fleet? On overall Marine Corps readiness?

CH-53K delays directly affect the heavy-lift capacity shortfall and the Marine Corps' ability to effectively execute the National Defense Strategy (NDS). The CH-53E is a capable platform and still has sufficient remaining airframe life to absorb reasonable delays in the CH-53K program. Though efforts like CH-53E Reset and Engine Reliability Improvement Program will improve that airframe's readiness and availability, the lack of inventory (shortfall 50+ aircraft) and obsolescence issues are a significant risk to the Marine Corps' ability to fight future conflicts with the current operational concepts.

Modernization of Capabilities

The Marine Corps current concepts for modernization of its amphibious capabilities includes ships, ship to shore connectors—such as the Landing Craft Air Cushion—and armored amphibious combat vehicles. Modernization across these systems is complex, technically challenging, and costly.

What is your assessment of the current capability of amphibious maneuver and assault systems in the Navy and Marine Corps?

We must invest in modernization of key amphibious capabilities (force protection, long range fires, resilient C5I force networks, agile distributed logistics, etc.) that enhance operational maneuver in a contested environment against a peer competitor. Our current resource requests prioritizes our future naval force capabilities; not just conventional, but also NextGen weapons, AI, and unmanned/man-machine learning and integration. A dynamic threat environment continues to drive creative, adaptable capability development, unconventional and new operational concepts, and alternative force structure composition. We are masters of effective global littoral operations and must retain our tactical and operational advantages as adversaries attempt to match us.

If confirmed, how would you propose to prioritize the development and acquisition of capabilities required for sea basing, connectors, and armored amphibious assault and tactical mobility ashore to achieve a full spectrum capability in the Marine Corps?

Based on our assessment of the future operating environment, we have deliberately prioritized mission areas where we anticipate a gap between our current warfighting capabilities and the capabilities we will need to retain overmatch against a peer competitor.

We are the nation's crisis response force, which requires capable and ready amphibious warfighting platforms and a family of modern connectors. Our expeditionary warfare system must be networked, lethal, resilient, and must enable quicker movement to new technologies and capabilities faster than our adversaries. Protected mobility to enhance maneuver ashore remains one of our top ground warfighting capability investment priorities. The Marine Corps' highest Ground Combat and Tactical Vehicle modernization priority is replacing the legacy Amphibious Assault Vehicle (AAV) with the Amphibious Combat Vehicle (ACV). The second highest priority for combat and tactical vehicle modernization remains the replacement of the legacy high mobility, multi-purpose, wheeled vehicle (HMMWV) fleet with the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle (JLTV). The Armored Reconnaissance Vehicle will not only replace our aging Light Armored Vehicles, but will effectively serve as our ground "quarterback" platform using manned-unmanned teaming of ground and aerial platforms

In your view, what is necessary to ensure that modernization of the amphibious force—ships, connectors, and vehicles—is achievable and affordable in the near and long terms?

First, we must work together with the Navy to identify an affordable and sustainable amphibious ship construction program and connector modernization program. We must be disciplined in our programmatic for all programs of record, and accelerate fielding wherever possible. We must also ensure judiciously applied resources are available for active maintenance and modernization programs in order to close existing gaps in operational availability, capability, and capacity.

Given the future envisioned by the 2018 NDS: high-intensity combined arms combat inland and fighting a peer or near peer opponent, are current Marine Corps modernization plans and budgets adequate?

I am confident that we have a solid foundation for our modernization planning, in the form of our operating concepts, Littoral Operations in a Contested Environment and Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations. We have conducted extensive wargaming on these concepts and corresponding experimentation with developmental capabilities, and will continue to do so. Maintaining a margin of overmatch against peer competitors requires fiscal stability and predictability.

Amphibious Combat Vehicle (ACV)

The Navy and Marine Corps amphibious assault capability today includes a large number of self-deploying amphibious assault vehicles (AAV-7) to carry infantry ashore, and a lesser number of small vessels—connectors—that can ferry other vehicles, such as tanks, artillery, and supplies from ship to shore. The Marine Corps is procuring the Amphibious Combat Vehicle as a modernized platform to replace the aging AAV-7 fleet. Despite originally planning for an ACV1.1 and ACV 1.2, fielding will be in the ACV 1.2 variant.

Do you support the Marine Corps' decision to cancel the survivability upgrade to the AAV-7?

Yes. AAV Survivability Upgrade (SU) was, in part, a mitigation for the uncertainty as to whether or not the ACV would demonstrate performance sufficient to fully replace the AAV. ACV has exceeded performance expectations and is now planned to completely replace the legacy system. ACV begins fielding next year and is on track to achieve Initial Operational Capability by fourth quarter fiscal year 2020. The success of the Amphibious Combat Vehicle (ACV) program mitigates the loss of survivability upgraded legacy systems.

In your view, where does armored amphibious assault fit in the set of capabilities required to field a credible amphibious operations capability?

The capability to project power from the sea ensures joint freedom of maneuver against increasingly sophisticated area denial and anti-access strategies across the range of military operations in areas vital to our national interest. To this end, an ACV creates operational and tactical options through rapid maneuver on sea and land; provides for the seamless transition

of combat power from sea to land; enables rapid response to crisis; enables the introduction of joint follow-on forces; and can impose disproportionate costs on our enemies who must extend their defenses.

Operational Energy

DOD defines *operational energy* as the energy required for training, moving, and sustaining military forces and weapons platforms for military operations, including the energy used by tactical power systems, generators, and weapons platforms. Longer operating distances, remote and austere geography, and anti-access/area denial threats are challenging DOD's ability to assure the delivery of fuel. As the ability to deliver energy is placed at risk, so too is the Department's ability to deploy and sustain expeditionary Marine forces around the globe.

What are your ideas for future capabilities that would enable an expeditionary Marine Corps through the assured delivery of energy to the warfighter?

I believe that as part of the Naval Force in a contested environment against a peer competitor – we should view logistics as our pacing function and energy as a pacing commodity. As an expeditionary force, we must be able to operate in austere environments which drives us to reduce energy requirements and become more energy efficient. If confirmed, I will work closely with industry to develop and field more energy efficient combat systems and improved capabilities to store and distribute energy within the force.

What are your ideas for reducing the risks associated with the Corps' dependence on vulnerable supply lines?

Our recently published concept for future logistics development addresses vulnerable supply lines in each of its four lines of effort: Diversify Distribution, Improve Sustainment, Enable Global Logistics Awareness, and Optimize Installations. We also must train to operate in austere environments and become more self-sustaining and self-sufficient.

Cyber

In May 2018, the Cyber Mission Force achieved full operational capability. In September, DOD released its 2018 Cyber Strategy.

In your view, how well postured is the Marine Corps to meet the goals outlined in the 2018 DOD Cyber Strategy? What actions will you take, if confirmed, to remediate any gap between Marine Corps capacity and capability and Cyber Strategy goals?

The planning and continued implementation of Marine Corps Force 2025 directly supports the strategy outlined in the 2018 DoD Cyber Strategy. The Marine Corps added 521 billets of Marines and civilians to our cyber force, complete in Fiscal Year 2022. We have established

a cyberspace occupational field to cultivate talent, we will better compete with and deter our adversaries in cyberspace as we defend forward, shape day-to-day competition, and prepare for war. If confirmed, I will carry out my Title 10 responsibility to organize, train, and equip this force to maintain its lethality, stay one step ahead of our adversaries, and support the requirements of U. S. Cyber Command while meeting the needs of our Marine Air Ground Task Forces.

In your view, should the composition of the Cyber Mission Force be adjusted across the National Mission Teams, Combat Mission Teams, Cyber Protection Teams, and Cyber Support Teams, better to address the requirements identified in the 2018 NDS and the goals set forth in the 2018 Cyber Strategy?

The Marine Corps currently provides an appropriate capacity to the Cyber Mission Force. As U.S. Cyber Command assesses the composition and alignment of assigned teams, we will assess our Service contribution to overall requirements.

In your view, what unique skills do Marines contribute to the Cyber Mission Force?

Our expertise in expeditionary operations and our inherent Marine Air Ground Task Force construct is a good fit as part of a combined arms effort to the Joint Force.

Are the size and capabilities of the Marine Corps component of the Cyber Mission Force and Marine Corps cybersecurity service providers sufficient to meet current and future cyber and information warfare requirements?

At present, I believe our current and planned growth will be sufficient to meet cyberspace operations requirements. However, given the rapid growth and expansion of the domain and the tools and weapons systems that are dependent on data communications, the human capital inventory and related expertise must be periodically reevaluated.

If confirmed, what will you do to enhance Marine Corps information dominance capabilities?

If confirmed, I will fully support and empower the recently created Deputy Commandant for Information. I will continue the standup of our Marine Expeditionary Force Information Group. These initiatives and addition of information as the seventh warfighting function have put the Marine Corps on track to meet new and emerging threats. Our ongoing efforts to consolidate network governance, develop a unified data strategy, and implement artificial intelligence and machine learning will secure and optimize the Marine Corps' networks and enhance decision making.

If confirmed, what would you do to improve military cybersecurity career pathways to meet the present and future needs of the Corps and U.S. Cyber Command?

This begins with prioritizing and resourcing the formal screening and selection of technically oriented and qualified Marines, both officers and enlisted. Competence requires resident joint education, commercial/industry education, competitive command opportunities, and key joint billets that complement their professional development, beginning early in their careers. If confirmed, I will ensure continued investment in incentive programs and advanced education opportunities to recruit and retain the best qualified Marines.

In March 2019, the Secretary of the Navy released his *Cyber Readiness Review*. The Report presented a scathing assessment of the Department of the Navy’s approach to cybersecurity, finding that “[c]ompetitors and potential adversaries have exploited DON information systems, penetrated its defenses, and stolen massive amounts of national security” intellectual property. The Report hi-lighted the urgent need for the Navy and Marine Corps to modify their business and data hygiene processes to protect data as a resource.

Consistent with the *Cyber Readiness Review*, what are the first actions you would direct to enhance cyber defenses in the Marine Corps, if confirmed?

In the current operating environment we know adversarial actors are seeking to penetrate our networks. To combat such a pervasive threat and win in the future operating environment, we need a culture shift that makes cybersecurity as central to a Marine’s identity as the dictum, “Every Marine a Rifleman.” We have identified 15 specified and implied tasks drawn from the review. Working with our Navy partners, we are currently addressing each one with the various Marine Corps stakeholders. If confirmed, I will expect our service cybersecurity experts to review and validate each issue, determine how well we are addressing each task, and target how we can improve upon any deltas discovered.

What would you do to improve the cybersecurity culture across the Marine Corps workforce—military, civilian, and contractor? How would you empower and hold accountable key Marine Corps leaders to improve the Service’s cybersecurity culture?

Every Marine, civilian Marine, and contractor (anyone who touches our network) has to actively counter the cybersecurity threat. As a service, we are proactively training our users to create a culture conducive to cybersecurity and dispel notions that only IT professionals or cyber operators should care about cybersecurity. Commanders must understand their role in defending the network and reduce user error - including enforcing disciplinary action on Marines and civilians who violate acceptable use policies. The operators at U.S. Marine Corps Forces Cyberspace Command identify network users who violate policies, but commander participation is key.

The Air Force announced that in the summer of 2019, Air Combat Command would merge the Twenty Fourth and Twenty Fifth Numbered Air Forces to better integrate cyber effects, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance operations, electronic warfare operations, and information operations.

In your view, are there commands and organizations that should be merged similarly to increase unity of effort across such capabilities in the Marine Corps? Please explain your answer.

In 2017, as the Chairman formalized information as the seventh joint function, we established a new Deputy Commandant for Information (DC I) to oversee plans and investments for new service information capabilities and practices. Most importantly, DC I is guiding the development of our new Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) Information Groups (MIGs). These tactical formations are now established at each MEF, and are charged with planning and integrating operations in the information environment with traditional military activities to enhance lethality and competitive advantage.

Science, Technology, and Innovation

U.S. superiority in key areas of innovation is decreasing or has disappeared, while our competitors are engaging in aggressive military modernization and advanced weaponry development. DOD has identified ten key areas in which investment to develop next generation operational capabilities is imperative: hypersonics; fully networked C3; directed energy; cyber; space; quantum science; artificial intelligence (AI)/machine learning; microelectronics; autonomy; and biotechnology. Much of the innovation in these technologies that could prove suitable for national defense purposes is occurring outside of the traditional defense industry.

What do you see as the most significant challenges (e.g., technical, organizational, or cultural) to U.S. development of these key technologies?

For the Marine Corps I think we will continue to see the largest challenges in the technical arena as we continue to deal with Size/Weight/Power constraints that support and enable mobility requirements of our expeditionary warfighting concepts. Sometimes, however, the challenge depends on the capability area. In some areas, we are still developing a full understanding of how emerging capabilities can increase lethality and warfighting effectiveness. Robotics and autonomous systems are a great example. In other areas, technological advances are outpacing organizational norms requiring new lexicons, policies, standards and business rules to keep pace. We see this in artificial intelligence and autonomous munitions. We are also making progress instituting a culture of innovation across the Marine Corps.

In your view, has DOD properly integrated and synchronized investments in these technologies across all Services?

Determining a precise requirement within each of the above technologies may be the most significant challenge to the U.S. We need a collective, comprehensive, agreed upon strategy for exploitation with defined roles amongst the Services. Mandated direction must be established, autonomous, and discretion must be held to an absolute minimum; in order to ensure prudent expenditure of precious resources. Through the use of wargaming and

experimentation, we can narrow down specific requirements to build understanding of commonality across DoD and the U.S. This will assist in scoping development, integration, and investment in each technology.

How has the Marine Corps prioritized limited R&D funding across your technology focus areas? Specifically, where is the Corps either increasing or decreasing focus and funding?

We have made key strides in aligning shared priorities of C2, Long Range Precision Fires, Information Warfare, Air Defense, Protected Mobility, and Logistics. We are allocating resources to speed delivering capabilities to the warfighter. These shared R&D priorities will guide and align investment and divestment decisions, optimizing the allocation of vital resources.

How is the Marine Corps balancing revolutionary capability advancements as compared to “quick win” incremental improvements that can be rapidly fielded?

One approach we have used is to start introducing new capabilities as prototypes directly to the fleet, such that they can develop TTPs in parallel, rather than spending years doing developmental and operational testing before the capability gets to the fleet. There is some risk here, but with the rate of technological change, we cannot afford to do the latter.

What efforts is the Marine Corps making to identify new technologies developed commercially by the private sector and apply them to military and national security purposes? What are the challenges that you perceive to increasing collaboration between the private sector and Marine Corps?

The Marine Corps Warfighting Lab is our primary touchpoint when it comes to emerging technologies. We have increased our coordination with the Office of Naval Research, DARPA, SCO, and the other DoD labs to maintain visibility on the advances both inside and outside DoD. The largest challenge of increasing collaboration will continue to be our acquisition processes, and while congress has given us much more authority in recent years, we still have work to do in order to get us to the level of programming flexibility needed.

In your view, what steps must DOD take to protect and strengthen our National Security Innovation Base to ensure that critical information is protected?

In an effort to protect this critical information, the DoD established the Protecting Critical Technology Task Force (PCTTF) in October 2018. The PCTTF was tasked with integrating, accelerating, and scaling DoD protection efforts; institutionalizing change to protect critical technologies; and preserving the DoD's competitive advantage. In concert with the PCTTF, the Marine Corps Capability Protection Cell, alongside counterintelligence and physical security Marines, are working to identify critical information and counter espionage attempts from all adversarial actors.

End Strength

The Marine Corps' Active duty end strength authorization has grown from 184,100 in FY 2015 to 186,100 in FY 2019. The FY 2020 President's Budget would fund an additional 100 Marines.

Do you believe Marine Corps' Active duty end strength must continue to grow?

We must return to a 1:3 Deployment-to-Dwell (D2D) force to have the time required to properly train for a high-end fight and achieve balance with our Marines and their families at home, both of which impact recruiting, retention, and morale of our Marines. Assuming no growth in our topline, we must consider reducing end strength in order to fully recover readiness and accelerate modernization.

Is the Marine Corps' current end strength sufficient to implement the 2018 NDS and execute the associated operational plans? If not, what end strength do you believe is necessary to meet the demands placed on the Marine Corps by the 2018 NDS and associated operational plans?

The Marine Corps' current end strength and its allocation within the subsequent fiscal year allocation plan are sufficient to implement the 2018 NDS, but our current operational tempo is unsustainable in the long term.

If Active Marine Corps end strength is increased, what specific parameters would you use to determine what the corresponding Marine Corps Reserve end strength should be in order to support those active forces?

We view the Marine Corps through a total force lens. Any change to end strength in our active duty force requires a corresponding review and assessment of our reserve force.

If BCA caps on defense spending return in FY 2020, what will be the effect on Active and Reserve Marine Corps end strengths? How would the manpower mix between the Active Navy and Marine Corps Reserve be affected?

BCA caps could potentially impact planned growth in the Active Component. Our current strength of 186,100 is planned to grow to 186,400 by FY21, which primarily supports growth in MARSOC Combat Service Support (CSS) capabilities previously requested by USSOCOM.

What additional force shaping authorities and tools does the Marine Corps need, in your view?

If confirmed, I will continue to appreciate the flexibility afforded by existing force shaping authorities, and Congress' continued support for new force shaping authorities. As the

Marine Corps aligns our force design with the National Defense Strategy and continues to refine our requirements for technical skills, such as cyber, we will determine if additional force shaping authorities are necessary.

Marine Reserve

In your view, what is the appropriate relationship between the Active Marine Corps and the Marine Corps Reserve?

The Reserve Component exists to augment, support, and reinforce the Active Component as an integral part of the Marine Corps Total Force. In addition to providing operational and strategic depth, the Reserve Component provides individual augmentation to regional Marine Forces and Marine Expeditionary Force staffs to reinforce the Active Component across all warfighting functions. The Marine Corps Reserve, as a subset of the “Total Force” Marine Corps, exists to augment, reinforce, and sustain the Active Component for employment across the full range of military operations. The ability of the Marine Corps to meet combatant commanders’ requirements on a day-to-day basis, as well as in response to a major contingency, is absolutely linked to the readiness of our Marine Corps Reserve. We integrate our Reserves into everything that we do.

What is your vision for the roles and missions of the Marine Corps Reserve? If confirmed, what new objectives would you seek to achieve with respect to the Reserve's organization, force structure, and end strength?

The mission of the Marine Corps Reserve is to augment and reinforce the Active Component across the full range of military operations. Additionally, the Marine Corps Reserve serves a vital role in military funeral honors and community outreach. In the context of objectives for the future organization, force structure, and end strength, the Marine Corps Reserve is completely integrated into the overarching Total Force Marine Corps’ warfighting operating concepts, doctrine, and force capability initiatives.

Are you concerned that continued reliance on the Reserve Components to execute operational missions—both at home and around the globe—is adversely affecting the Marine Corp Reserve’s ability to meet its recruiting and retention missions? Why or why not?

No. I believe that the opportunity for Reserve Marines to mobilize in support contemporary missions helps our retention efforts.

In your view, does the Marine Corps Reserve serve as an operational reserve, a strategic reserve, or both? In light of your answer, should the Marine Corps Reserve be supported by improved equipment, increased training, and higher levels of overall resourcing for readiness going forward?

The Marine Corps Reserve serves in both an operational and strategic capacity, supporting pre-planned, rotational, and routine combatant commander and service requirements in its operational role, while also supporting deliberate plans for major contingency operations in its strategic role. As a Total Force, the Marine Corps strives to horizontally field modernized equipment and uses the same standards for training and readiness; facilitating the seamless integration of Reserve Component forces.

Do you expect to meet prior service accession goals for the Marine Corps Reserve this fiscal year? Why or why not?

Yes. The Marine Corps is on pace to meet this fiscal year's reserve component prior service recruiting accession requirement in each category for both officer and enlisted accessions.

What is your understanding and view of the Office of the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness proposal for comprehensive Reserve Component Duty Status Reform?

My view is that this is a very positive and necessary step to simplify Reserve duty statuses to better manage our Reserves. The Marine Corps fully supports this positive and necessary reform. The categorization of duty statuses and alignment to benefits provides simplicity and clarity to Reserve Marines and their families while reducing complexity for Commanders.

Does the Marine Corps have the personnel and pay information technology systems required to implement effectively this Reserve Component Duty Status Reform proposal, if enacted in law?

Yes, the Marine Corps Total Force System (MCTFS) is a mature, fully-integrated pay and personnel system that allows our Reserve members to seamlessly transition between components. We foresee no issues incorporating the duty status reform changes into MCTFS.

Recruiting and Retention

The National Defense Strategy Commission asserted unequivocally that the most critical resource required to produce a highly capable military is highly capable people, in the quantity required, willing to serve. Yet, DOD studies indicate that only about 29% of today's youth population is eligible for military service. Further, only a fraction of those who meet military accession standards are interested in serving.

What do you consider to be the key to your future success, if confirmed, in recruiting the highest caliber American youth for service in the Marine Corps?

The key to success — today and in the future, is our institutional investment in recruiting. 46 years of refinement have taught us to invest in three key areas: people, funding, and quality. First and foremost are our people. We put our best Marines on this most important

special duty assignment. Second is funding, recruiting an all-volunteer force is a costly endeavor that requires upfront investments. History has shown that a fully funded recruiting force results in lower attrition and greater overall readiness. Finally, the cornerstone to recruiting quality Marines rests in building and sustaining close relationships with the thousands of high schools across America.

What do you consider to be key to your future success, if confirmed, in retaining the best qualified personnel for continued service in positions of greater responsibility and leadership in the Marine Corps?

If confirmed, I will ensure that we continue to optimize our ability to retain and develop the talent necessary to achieve our strategic objectives. Focused on mission readiness, we must ensure we maintain an organization where all members are valued based on their individual excellence and commitment to warfighting.

What steps, if any, do you feel should be taken to ensure that current operational requirements and tempo do not adversely impact the overall recruiting, retention, readiness, and morale of Marines?

Currently, our overall deployment-to-dwell (D2D) ratio is 1:2, but the ratio is even higher for some Marines depending on what unit they are assigned to and the operational demand for those units. Operating at a 1:2 D2D ratio, although not sustainable, is a conscious, short-term decision we must make to balance modernization while meeting current demand and simultaneously recovering our readiness. We owe our Marines and their families the necessary time to reset and train for the next deployment or contingency. We must return to a 1:3 D2D force to have the time required to train for the high-end fight and achieve balance with our Marines and their families at home, both of which impact recruiting, retention, and morale of our Marines.

In your view, do current recruiting standards—particularly DOD-wide criteria for tier-one recruits—accurately predict recruit attrition and/or future success in the Marine Corps?

Yes. Studies underpinning education standards have shown that education Tier I recruits typically attrite less, perform better, and promote faster than education Tier II recruits. The Marine Corps believes in the value of a Tier I high school diploma as a predictor of quality and success, which is why we anchor our recruiting efforts in high schools. It is important to note, however, that education is not a singular or sole predictor of success in our Corps.

What impact, if any, do you believe the new Blended Retirement System (BRS) will have on recruiting and retention in the Marine Corps?

It is too early to tell the impacts of BRS on retention. Understanding BRS effects on recruiting/retention won't occur for many years. The Marine Corps is closely monitoring retention behavior for any trends.

Why, in your view, did Marines “opt in” to BRS at a rate significantly higher than that in any other Military Service?

The Marine Corps is a much younger than the other military services. As such, we have more service members who are likely to experience greater benefit from participation in the BRS, and therefore more likely to opt in to the system. We also focused a great deal of effort on training the BRS opt-in eligible force in order to ensure that Marines had the tools to make informed retirement decisions.

What monetary and non-monetary incentives are the Marine Corps employing in an effort to retain Marine aviators? Which incentives or combinations thereof have proven most effective?

We offer monetary incentives for some specific specialties. Retention bonuses have some influence on an individual’s decision to depart or remain in the service. However, monetary incentives are not the only factor in such a decision, particularly where pilots are concerned. Pilot retention decisions are impacted most by availability of flight hours and the opportunity to train and/or execute their mission sets. We must address the issue holistically, by looking at monetary and non-monetary incentives, but also improving work-life balance, reducing non-flying tasks, and improving aviation maintenance, training, and production, all of which will support increased operational readiness.

Because the “all-Volunteer” military depends on a constant flow of volunteers each year, as the number of eligible and service-propensed American youth declines, it will become increasingly difficult to meet military needs.

Do you agree with the premise that the shortage in the number of American youth eligible and interested in serving in the Armed Forces poses an existential threat to national security?

The current challenges do not pose an existential threat to our country, but it poses serious concerns to our recruiting mission and our global commitments. A continued lack of eligibility and interest can and likely will undermine the efficacy of the all-volunteer force. In terms of recruiting an all-volunteer force, it poses significant challenges that will likely require additional resources to attract and retain the high quality, professional force we’ve come to expect in our Marine Corps.

What is the role of “influencers”—parents, grandparents, teachers, coaches, and clergy to whom a young person turns for advice—in a young person’s decision to join, or not to join the Marine Corps?

Influencers play a particularly important role in a young person’s decision to enlist from initial consideration all the way through the process to include the time in service itself. Today’s youth appear to be more connected and have a more substantial need for adult feedback on many decisions to include such large life decisions as accessing into the Marine Corps.

Has the integrated DOD recruiting campaign, *Their Success Tomorrow Begins With Your Support Today*, been successful in increasing the willingness of youth or their influencers to consider service in the Marine Corps?

We do not know. The campaign was designed to raise awareness and encourage conversations between young people and their influencers about the military as a whole. In general, the Marine Corps sees value in this messaging being produced to support all services, but are unable to determine the impacts as it relates to the Marine Corps at this time.

Military Compensation

The Department of Defense has traditionally assessed the competitiveness of military pay by comparing Regular Military Compensation against salaries earned by a comparable civilian demographic.

Do you agree that the primary purpose of a competitive military pay and benefits package is to recruit and retain a military of sufficient size and quality to meet the objectives of the 2018 NDS?

Yes.

What is your assessment of the adequacy of the current military pay package in achieving this goal—particularly given the ever-tightening recruiting market?

I believe that the current military compensation package is achieving its goal. The Marine Corps is meeting our recruiting and retention goals, and the quality of individuals we attract is extremely high. If confirmed, I will continue to assess the adequacy of military compensation to ensure that it continues to meet the need of the Marine Corps and the Nation to recruit and retain the highest quality Marines.

Do you believe the largely “one-size-fits-all” model for military pay adequately rewards individuals for their specialized skills and provides an appropriate incentive to scientists, engineers, and members of other high-value professions to access into the military?

We believe that the current military pay system provides an appropriate accession incentive. The Marine Corps is able to attract sufficient high-quality volunteers to meet requirements in all career fields under the current military pay system. We monitor this status on a continual basis to ensure that the compensation packages we offer remain competitive enough to attract required personnel.

Given that the Marine Corps has the highest percentage of service members who leave service after their first term, what is your assessment of the adequacy of compensation and benefits available for Marines who will not complete a career of service in the Corps?

By design, the Marine Corps is a young service and purposefully retains fewer service members at the first reenlistment decision point than the other services. We are currently meeting all of our recruiting and retention goals and the quality of the force is extremely high. This indicates that the compensation and benefits package we offer for non-career Marines is adequate.

What changes, if any, would you recommend to the current military pay and benefits package?

The current military pay and benefits package is adequate to meet the requirements of the 2018 NDS. If confirmed, I will continually assess compensation to ensure that it remains adequate to meet those requirements and maintain the proper balance between compensation, training, equipment, and modernization.

What specific recommendations do you have for controlling the rising cost of military personnel?

We have recently made significant changes to systems that should have impacts on the overall cost of military personnel. The Blended Retirement System and the increased service member cost share of the Basic Allowance for Housing are two examples. The financial impacts of these changes are currently unknown and require continued monitoring. It is prudent that we understand the impacts of the changes we have made before exploring additional actions.

Voluntary Education and Credentialing Programs

Do you believe that DOD and Marine Corps Voluntary Education Programs contribute to Marine Corps recruiting and retention, and to military readiness? If so, why? If not, why not?

I believe there is a correlation between the availability of our voluntary education opportunities and overall recruiting, retention, and readiness. Programs, like Tuition Assistance, are popular and valued by Marines. What Marines learn and achieve in these schools makes the Marine Corps better and makes our Marines more ready to understand their operating environments, solve problems, and outthink our adversaries.

What effects have the Marine Corps' Tuition Assistance (TA) program had on Marine professional development and degree completion?

Marines used Tuition Assistance to attain approximately 1,100 degrees in FY18.

Is the Corps' investment in TA justified, given the current budget environment?

Yes, it is a great investment in the current and future leaders of our Corps.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you recommend to the Corps' current eligibility criteria for TA?

Gen Neller recently repealed the minimum time-in-service requirement for Marines taking TA. Now, if a Marine qualifies for TA, he or she can participate as soon as arriving at their new duty stations, rather than having to wait 24 months. If confirmed, I would like to give this new initiative time to take effect before recommending any additional changes.

What progress has the Marines Corps made in identifying and leveraging credentialing programs, both to enhance a Marine's ability to perform his/her official duties, and to qualify the Marine for meaningful civilian employment on separation from the Corps?

The Marine Corps' Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) provides Marines with the opportunity to achieve certification for skills and accomplishments they have achieved in service. These credentials are tied to civilian certificates and can be taken into the civilian world when they transition. In addition, through Skillbridge, a Marine can participate in a variety of programs including commercial driver's licensing, computer programming, and industry fellowship, within 180 days of separation from service. More than 1,000 Marines availed themselves of various Skillbridge programs in FY18.

Non-Deployable Service members

Recently, the Department published DODI 1332.45, *Retention Determinations for Non-Deployable Service members*.

Do you agree that Marines who are non-deployable for more than 12 consecutive months should be subject either to separation from the Marine Corps or referral into the Disability Evaluation System?

Yes, but they are also considered for retention based on the reason for non-deployability and the likelihood of when they would return to full duty and contribute to the mission.

How many Marines have been separated or referred into the Disability Evaluation System as a result of this policy?

In 2018, we separated or retired 3,728 Marines through the disability evaluation system. The Marine Corps has always prudently, but expeditiously, separated recruits and Marines who have been in a prolonged non-deployable status based upon medical advice and the commanding officer's evaluation of their ability to return to full duty. Our past processes and procedures for retention and separation fall in line with the new policy.

DODI 1332.45 provides that the Secretaries of the Military Departments may “retain . . . those service members whose period of non-deployability exceeds the 12 consecutive month limit . . . if determined to be in the best interest of the Military Service.”

In your view, under what circumstances might the retention of a Marine who has been non-deployable for more than 12 months be “in the best interest of the Marine Corps”?

We look at the Marine’s ability to perform appropriate military duties commensurate with their grade, MOS and billet and the likelihood of resolving the reason that is the cause of their non-deployable status.

In your view, how should this policy be applied to Marines with HIV? To Marines who identify as transgender?

The new non-deployability policy should, and does, apply equally to all Marines.

Has the Marine Corps established any class or group of personnel deemed “deployable with limitations,” such that the class or group is exempt from the 12-month non-deployable retention determination requirement?

Marines with HIV would fall in this category because their deployability would depend on the combatant commander’s medical criteria for deployment. Generally, CENTCOM and AFRICOM preclude deployment of HIV positive Marines. Current practice is to assign those Marines to units not likely to deploy to CENTCOM or AFRICOM or re-assign them if deployment to one of those areas is to occur.

What percentage of both the Active and Reserve Marine Corps is presently non-deployable as defined by DODI 1332.45? In your view, what is the percentage of Marines in the Active Corps and the percentage of Marines in the Reserve who can be non-deployable at any given time without adversely affecting the readiness of the force to execute the 2018 NDS and associated operational plans?

Approximately 4.2% of the Active Component and 6.7% of the Reserve Component are non-deployable at any one time. Our Total Force percentage is 4.6%, meeting the DoD goal of no more than 5% of the Total Force being non-deployable.

If confirmed, what would you do to improve the timeliness of Marine referral to, and processing through the Disability Evaluation System?

Working with OSD and the other Services, the Marine Corps has participated in the redesign of the DES model to reduce the original processing goal timeline of 295 to 180 days effective 1 Oct 19. If confirmed, I will ensure continued collaboration between medical providers and the chain of command which remains crucial to ensure the timeliness of the process.

Service of Transgender Persons

In January of 2019, the Supreme Court issued an order allowing DOD to implement this Administration's policy prohibiting some transgender persons from joining the military. The new DOD policy took effect on April 12, 2019.

If confirmed, what would be your role in implementing the new DOD policy on the service of transgender persons in the Marine Corps?

If confirmed, it will be my role is to ensure commanding officers understand and effectively implement the policy.

In your view, does allowing a Marine who accessed into the Service in his/her preferred gender or who received a diagnosis of gender dysphoria from a military medical provider before April 12, 2019, to continue to serve in the Marine Corps under policies and procedures established by then-Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter in 2016, promote or detract from military readiness? Please explain your answer.

Gender dysphoria is a serious medical condition. Treatment of any medical condition can impacts readiness. However, the Marine Corps supports the DoD policy of providing an exemption for those who sought treatment under the 2016 policy.

How will the Corps determine which Marines should be "grandfathered" under the 2016 policy?

The Marine Corps will follow DoD policy. DoD policy allows Marines to be exempt under the 2018 policy if the gender dysphoria diagnosis was made by, or confirmed by, a military medical provider before 12 April 2019.

In your view, what would be the impact on readiness of requiring the separation of all presently serving transgender Marines?

There is no requirement to separate transgender Marines and we do not track transgender status. Transgender persons should not be disqualified from service solely on account of their transgender status.

In your experience, has the service of transgender individuals in their preferred gender had any negative impacts on unit or overall readiness in the Navy?

I am not aware of any specific impacts. Gender dysphoria is a serious medical condition. Treatment of any medical condition can impact readiness.

Women in the Marine Corps

In December 2015, then-Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter changed policies applicable to women in military service, opening all occupations and units to the assignment of women.

What challenges still exist with regard to the assignment of women to Marine Corps infantry occupations and units, and what proactive measures are Corps leaders taking to address those challenges?

The integration of women into previously restricted MOSs under our Marine Corps Integration Implementation Plan is progressing without significant issues. The Marine Corps remains committed to providing the most combat effective force by capitalizing on the knowledge, skills, and abilities of every Marine. The overall percentage of females in the Marine Corps has increased from 7.3 percent to 8.7 percent in last 5 years. Due to our integration efforts, females are now represented in every occupational field, including infantry. We continue to gather data on all Marines serving in the previously-restricted MOSs and units, and while some parameters will need years to generate statistically relevant data, the Marine Corps is fully committed to the long term success of female integration.

In your view, what more can the Marines Corps do to increase the propensity of qualified women to enlist or access in the Marine Corps? To enlist or access in Marine Corps infantry occupations?

The Marine Corps recruits and retains the best Marines, regardless of gender. Our overarching goal is combat effectiveness and lethality. However, we are increasing the amount of female-inclusive and female-specific marketing and advertising to generate awareness about what it means to be a Marine and to highlight opportunities for females in the Marine Corps. These efforts continue to be successful. Our Commandant has stated that he would like to grow the Marine Corps to 10 percent female. Our Marine Corps is now 8.7 percent female, up from 7.3 percent five years ago. In FY18 (and so far in FY19), over 10 percent of both enlisted and officer accessions were females.

Earlier this year, the Marine Corps integrated 50 female recruits into a historically all-male training battalion aboard recruit depot Parris Island.

What are your observations with respect to this integration?

The single gender platoon training model remains the cornerstone of the civilian to Marine transformation process. It is important to note a single iteration does not conclusively predict future success of the combined company model, variables such as time of year, staff experience level, and company/platoon size are statistical factors with no current correlation. With that said, the performance statistics which are measured for every recruit training company reflected no significant variations when compared to other training companies across the Recruit Training Regiment. There were no identifiable requirements for substantive change with respect to the program of instruction (POI), recruit training schedules, and the single gender platoon training model.

In your view, how was Marine Corps acculturation and boot camp training affected by the integration of female recruits?

The recruit training program of instruction (POI) remains unchanged. Unchanged is the fact that a majority of recruit training events are already gender combined in that recruits of both genders train in the same locations, at the same time and with each other. Recruits will continue to be led and instructed by both male and female Marines. This will not change. Lastly, follow-on enlisted entry level training (ELT) following recruit training is and will remain combined at the squad and fire team-level.

If confirmed, how will you and the Marine Corps apply the lessons learned from this trial run going forward?

The Marine Corps continually examines and evaluates our training to ensure its effectiveness, and we implement changes based on validated requirements. While we look for future opportunities to conduct gender-combined training where prudent, we remain firmly committed to the benefits and proven success of the gender-specific platoon training model.

Military Quality of Life

The Committee remains concerned about the sustainment of key quality of life programs for military families, such as family advocacy and parenting skills programs; child care; spouse education and employment support; health care; and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) services.

If confirmed, what quality of life and MWR programs would you consider a priority?

The Marine Corps delivers many of its quality of life programs via an integrated Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS) construct that combines Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR); Marine Corps Exchange (MCX); Warfighter and Family Services; and Child Development Programs. If confirmed, I will ensure that we sustain these priority programs that support the health, welfare and morale of our Marines and families. I will also maintain a dialogue with our Marines and families to ensure that our programs adapt to meet their highest priority needs.

How would you work across the Marine Corp and with Military Service Organizations and Congress, to sustain and enrich high-value quality of life and MWR programs for Marines and their families? What factors would you consider in assessing which MWR programs are ineffective or outmoded and thus potentially suitable for elimination or reduction in scope?

The Marine Corps hosts a quarterly meeting with various Military and Veteran Service Organizations (VSO) and fellow service branches to identify areas where outside support may be provided to service members. This effort is supported by national and

local VSOs with participation from their senior leadership and the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps. We also actively participate in Congressional briefings and roundtable events to foster collaboration on these important issues.

Family Readiness and Support

What do you consider to be the most important family readiness issues for Marines and their families?

There is an enduring challenge to build and develop support networks among Marine families within their communities, neighborhoods, and units. We must continue to reach out to our Marine families and urge them to give the proper attention to their family readiness. Related to this issue is the challenge with connecting with the new generation of Marines and their families. The younger Marines joining the Corps today have a different expectation for communication and seek “just in time” information. New technology is necessary to meet their communication expectations. Fiscal constraints also continue to impact family readiness; we must always seek the proper balance in funding family readiness programs with the other needs of the Marine Corps.

If confirmed, how would you ensure that the family readiness issues you identified are properly addressed and adequately resourced?

Ensuring Marines and families have the opportunities to get involved in their communities is key. This can be done by prioritizing unit cohesion events, emphasizing the importance of mentorship, and promoting the benefits of volunteer opportunities. Maintaining the appropriate number of embedded assets within the Commands to educate Marines and families of available resources; utilizing innovative technology to communicate with the new generation of Marines and families; and staffing Family Readiness Personnel to maintain a team approach are also very important. Fiscal constraints also continue to impact family readiness; we must always seek the proper balance in funding family readiness programs with the other needs of the Marine Corps.

If confirmed, how would you ensure that support related to mobilization, deployment, and family readiness is provided to Marine Corps Reserve families, as well as to Active duty Marine families who do not reside near a military installation?

Family readiness programs offered on installations are available to the Marine Corps Reserve Families and those not residing near a military installation. Supporting trainers who currently travel to remote locations and having an adequate number of embedded civilian personnel in place are essential. Utilizing technology to offer online trainings and enhanced communications, and increasing feedback capabilities, will help mitigate concerns and challenges.

The Committee often hears that Active duty families have difficulty obtaining child care on base and that there are thousands of military families on waitlists to receive infant care.

If confirmed, what specifically would you do to provide Marine Corps families with accessible, high-quality childcare, at an appropriate cost?

The Marine Corps believes that high-quality, available child care is essential, and we strive to provide care to all qualified Marines and families in need. If confirmed, I will review current structures to strengthen child and youth services and ensure sufficient funding is available. Waitlists are often the result of challenges to fill direct care positions due to shortages of qualified workers, high turnover/low pay, lengthy hiring process, and seasonal PCS fluctuations. The Marine Corps is addressing these issues as part of a DoD child care compensation review and are in the process of implementing a non-competitive child care employee transfer program. Our Off Base Child Care Fee Assistance Program also helps cover the cost of child care within the local community for Marines who are geographically dispersed or on a waitlist.

What is your view of the efficacy of the Marine Corps implementation of the MilitaryChildCare.com system?

MilitaryChildCare.com (MCC) is fully operational across all Marine Corps installations and ensures consistency and timeliness with the child care placement process, which is vital to Marine Corps family readiness.

Many military families have communicated with the Committee about the significant hardships they experienced during the 2018 summer Permanent Change of Station (PCS) cycle, including: unprofessional and untrained household goods packers and movers; unannounced and extensive delays in the pickup and delivery of household goods; extensive damage to personal property; and limited engagement by the Military Services in providing oversight and taking corrective action on complaints.

If confirmed, how would you establish accountability in the Marine Corps for high quality service and support to military families undergoing a PCS move?

The Marine Corps called 12 Marine Reservists to Active Duty to conduct quality assurance inspections during peak moving season 2019. These additional quality assurance inspectors will increase oversight of packaging services and provide Marines and their families experienced government representatives to resolve problems when they arise. The additional 12 inspectors will allow the Marine Corps to achieve the updated 50% in-person inspection rate as required per DoD regulation as of August 2018. In concert with the other Services and USTRANSCOM, the Marine Corps developed standardized personal property training for the joint community. This manual standardizes entitlement counseling and quality assurance inspection criteria across the Department.

In your view, is it feasible to adjust military personnel policies to decrease the total number of PCS moves required across a Marine's career, without adversely affecting that Marine's career progression or military readiness?

PCS is an inherent part of military life, and necessary to meet national security readiness requirements and enable career development for Marines. We agree that PCS moves can be disruptive to family life and may undermine stability to a degree that may influence unit readiness and retention decisions. We make a great effort to provide support, through policy, resources, and programs to mitigate these challenges. A Marine's personnel monitor deliberately limits moves between geographic locations to those absolutely required, interacts with the Marine, evaluates their circumstances, and maximizes reassignments within the same geographic region whenever possible. We have also implemented new PCS flexibility that was authorized by Congress allowing certain Marines to move up to 6 months before or after their families. Our Marine Family Readiness programs ensure a host of relocation services are available to Marines and their families.

In your view, how can the policies enacted pursuant to the Military Family Stability Act be employed to distribute the demand for PCS moves more evenly across the entire year (rather than concentrating moves in the summer months)?

These new authorities will likely have no effect on distributing the demand for PCS moves more evenly across the entire year. They allow service members with dependents to elect to relocate their households at a time that better meets the needs of their family. We believe this will continue to occur in the summer months between the end and beginning of the next school years, which is the highest demand time.

Support for Military Families with Special Needs

If confirmed, how would you ensure that a Marine with a special needs family member is relocated only to a new duty station at which the medical and educational services required by that family member are available?

The Marine Corps Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) excels in its mission to ensure that Marines are assigned to duty stations where their family members will be able to access needed medical and educational services. Every Marine enrolled in EFMP receives a thorough and careful review of proposed PCS orders to ensure the location meets the medical and educational needs of family members.

If confirmed, how would you incentivize Marine enrollment in the exceptional family member program (EFMP)?

EFMP enrollment continues to increase as we provide Marines with accurate information about EFMP and the full array of services available. A recent study analyzed the impact of EFMP enrollment on individual Marine career progression and promotion and found that

EFMP enrollees tend to have a slightly longer career length, achieve a slightly higher rank by the end of their career, and reach their high grade in the same or shorter time than their non-enrolled peers.

If confirmed, what specific new initiatives would you suggest to assist a Marine with a special needs family member in advocating for and accessing individualized educational programs and other support to which their family member is entitled under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, including from local school districts in the vicinity of Marine Corps bases?

Part of our EFMP mission is to educate, inform, and empower families to become their own best advocate. This is done through training, resources, and individualized case management support, to include Family Needs Assessments and Service Plans. When desired, EFMP staff are available to attend and provide support to EFMP-enrolled families during individualized education programs (IEP) meetings with the school. The Marine Corps employs attorneys who can represent families with special needs who fail to receive special education services from local school districts as specified in the IEP.

If confirmed, what new initiatives might you suggest for improving the ability of Marines with a special needs family member to obtain the medical services and support their family member requires?

Our EFMP program functions as the TRICARE Liaison Office for Marine Corps families. In addition to connecting families with TRICARE representatives, EFMP also facilitates referrals to the Military OneSource EFMP Resource-Options and Consultations for additional TRICARE coordination and support. Identified gaps in service availability are brought to the attention of the Defense Health Agency and the OSD, Office of Special Needs.

Military Housing Privatization Initiative

In the FY 1996 NDAA Congress established the Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI), providing DOD with the authority to obtain private-sector financing and management to repair, renovate, construct, and operate military housing. DOD has since privatized 99 percent of its domestic housing. In recent months, the Committee has held two hearings to address widespread complaints that over the past several years, military families living in privatized housing have been exposed to environmental hazards, rodent and other infestations, and other conditions that render their quarters uninhabitable and, in some cases, endangered the health and well-being of their children. Certainly, some of the “private partners” charged to manage installation housing regularly tolerated shoddy repairs or closed work orders without action. Complaints to military housing management offices often remained unaddressed and, in many cases, military oversight and chain of command engagement were non-existent. Many family members expressed fears that in speaking out about the appalling condition of the quarters in which they lived, they were opening themselves and their Service member to reprisal.

What has the Marine Corps done to address Marine and family member concerns regarding the untenable living conditions prevalent in certain privatized housing locales?

The Marine Corps has been working closely with commanders, service members, installation housing offices, and housing partners to ensure that Marines know they are our greatest asset, and that they can expect quality housing and exceptional service no matter where they are stationed. Commanders across the Marine Corps have reached out to Marines living in privatized housing as well as those living in rental properties on the local economy to ascertain their housing experience and identify trends that need improvement. As of 15 April, the Marine Corps has made near 100% (99%+) personal contact and provided home visits or phone interviews with each service-member who chose to accept the visit/call. We have been educating the force on their rights as tenants and reiterating the process for resolving issues, as well as having leaders step in to advocate for residents. We have been tracking individual and aggregate work orders to ensure timely resolution and keep partners accountable, especially in cases that affect health and safety. Additionally, we have conducted town hall meetings, initiated an audit of the PPV housing program, and will conduct a special survey with residents. We are working with our housing partners to establish more relevant performance and incentive metrics. The Marine Corps strongly supports the roll out of the PPV partners' Mobile Maintenance Apps for service members to easily report and track maintenance.

If confirmed, what specifically would you do to establish accountability in the Marine Corps for sustaining the high quality housing that Marines and their families deserve?

The Marine Corps has reviewed the current structure of program oversight, tenant advocacy, and quality assurance. If confirmed, I will continue to support the analysis of the current housing management workforce and actions to increase staffing in the local housing offices for additional oversight and quality assurance of our partners' performance. I will aggressively support increased training for commanders as well as housing office staff to ensure effective oversight and improve tenant advocacy. Further, Service-wide housing instructions will be revised to better define installation leadership and housing office roles and responsibilities.

If confirmed, what specifically would you do to establish accountability in MHPI "contractors", particularly given that, in most cases, they have public-private partnership agreements with DOD that extend for as long as 50 years?

I am committed to long-term relationships with our housing partners. If confirmed, I will press the Marine Corps to work out mutually beneficial agreements and processes that deliver high quality housing for our Marines and their families. I will continue to support the creation of the DoD's Tenant Bill of Rights. I will ensure that the Bill of Rights sets a high standard for the treatment of our Marines and their quality of life. The Marine Corps is also re-evaluating how our partners' performance is measured and rewarded. I will support adjustments to our agreements to facilitate better oversight and reward partners only when they deliver on their

commitments. Just as ensuring quality housing for our Marines is a leadership issue, engagement with our partners is also commanders' business. I will ensure that commanders regularly engage with partners to keep a pulse on the housing environment and understand our partners' concerns to maintain mutually beneficial partnerships that deliver the highest quality housing to our Marines.

Given the challenges associated with the MHPI, do you support the proposed elimination of the position of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations, and the Environment?

I believe the functions performed by the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations, and the Environment including MHPI are important; therefore, regardless of organization, those roles and responsibilities must be preserved.

Given the challenges associated with MHPI, do you support the proposed privatization of Military Service lodging facilities?

The Marine Corps acknowledges that there are challenges to work through with MHPI. However, the Marine Corps also believes many improvements that occurred through privatization would not have been possible without this ability. The need to evaluate opportunities while utilizing lessons from the past make this option worth investigating more thoroughly.

To what extent, if any, have the Congressionally-mandated 25% reductions in management headquarters affected the number and capability of Navy employees charged to oversee privatized military housing matters—both at headquarters-level and at Marine Corps bases?

Reduction in overall staffing of the housing program, to include the Headquarters, has degraded the Marine Corps' ability to effectively execute quality assurance and advocacy. In particular to the headquarters, personnel reductions have degraded our ability to regularly analyze performance measurement data to affect process and policy adjustments, as well as our ability to effectively engage in long-term program planning.

Suicide Prevention

The number of suicides in each of the Services continues to concern the Committee.

If confirmed, what specifically would you do to maintain a strong focus on preventing suicides in the Active Marine Corps, the Marine Reserve, and in the families of your Marines?

Suicide reduction requires the coordinated efforts of an entire prevention network including Marine Corps leadership, individual Marines, families, and professionals. Marine Corps

leaders must continue to champion suicide prevention by promoting an environment that facilitates healthy stress reductions and cultivates mental wellness. Marines need to be provided with training to increase resiliency to combat stress they may face. For those Marines and family members exhibiting or at high risk for suicidal behaviors, effective identification and care must be provided and leaders need to stay engaged. Commanders must be trained to effectively use their Force Preservation Councils to ensure optimum awareness of every Marine. Marines who are ready to get back in the fight must be fully reintegrated in order to eliminate any stigma that can come with mental health treatment.

If confirmed, what actions will you take to ensure that sufficient mental health resources are available to Marines in theater, and to Marines and their families at home station?

Marines need access to providers, regardless of duty station. Increasing the number and availability of embedded providers can increase familiarity with the provider and decrease stigma. Local agreements with community-based assets can also be cultivated to ensure seamless care systems between embedded providers, Navy medical providers, USMC non-medical providers, and local resources at each of the home stations.

If confirmed, what specifically would you do to enhance the reporting and tracking of suicides among family members and dependents of Active and Reserve Component Marines?

Similar to the tracking of Active and Reserve Component Marines, adherence to mandatory protocols is needed to ensure the Marine Corps receives timely notification of all familial deaths by suicide.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

In your view, are the policies, programs, and training that the Marine Corps has put in place to prevent sexual assault and respond to sexual assault when it does occur, adequate and effective?

Sexual assault is a crime, and an affront to everything Marines and the Marine Corps stands for. We want everyone who believes they are a victim of sexual assault to feel free to come forward to report. We must and will continue to provide care services to victims. We must and will continue to hold those who have committed an offense accountable. Overall, I believe that our SAPR policies, programs, and training help prevent sexual assaults, provide care to victims, and hold offenders accountable. However, proving this is impossible since we do not know what the data would show absent such efforts. If confirmed, I can assure you that we will never relent in these efforts and are always seeking ways to improve prevention and response. I am 100% committed to working with the Department of Defense, Department of Navy, and Congress on this important issue.

Despite significant efforts by the Military Services to enhance the response to sexual assaults, including measures to care for victims and to hold assailants accountable, the rate of sexual assaults in the Marine Corps remains too high. If confirmed, what will you do to increase focus on the prevention of sexual assaults?

Education is fundamental to sexual assault prevention. All Marines need to know what constitutes sexual assault and that it is a crime. They also need education on healthy relationships and interactions, effective communication, problem solving, coping, empathy, engaged leadership, and boundaries. This training must occur throughout their Marine Corps careers, and be supported and exemplified by their leaders.

What is your view of the necessity of affording a victim both restricted and unrestricted options to report a sexual assault?

Both are necessary. Restricted reporting allows for those who are impacted by sexual assault to seek the support services they need without the command or law enforcement's involvement. The belief is that those Marines who report through restricted means are able to get the support they need and may eventually convert their report to unrestricted, allowing the command and law enforcement to conduct an investigation.

What is your assessment of the potential impact, if any, of proposals to remove from Marine Corps commanding officers, case disposition authority over felony violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including sexual assaults?

Removing the Commander as the disposition authority will have a negative impact on good order, discipline, and combat effectiveness. The Commander is responsible for the morale, welfare, good order, and discipline of a unit. This responsibility must be supported with the authority to take appropriate disciplinary action, including action on serious cases. Removing authority from the Commander also removes the accountability of the Commander to the other Marines in a unit. The bond of trust between the leader and the led is essential in combat, and must be supported by the confidence of all Marines that Commanders can and do hold accountable those who harm a unit's Marines, mission, or reputation through misconduct.

What is your assessment of the Marine Corps implementation of protections against retaliation (including reprisal; social ostracism; and acts of cruelty, oppression, and maltreatment) for reporting sexual assault?

Marine Corps implementation of protection against retaliation is aggressive and coordinated. The Prohibited Activities and Conduct Prevention and Response Order defines and prohibits several destructive behaviors, including retaliation, ostracism, hazing, and bullying related to reporting of sexual assault or other offenses. The order also requires investigation of every report of such behavior, establishes timelines for the handling of complaints, and requires documentation of substantiated complaints in the official military personnel files of offenders. The Sexual Assault Response and Prevention (SAPR) Program provides annual training to

all Marines on proper handling of reports of sexual assault. Commanders and senior leaders also receive additional training at the Senior Officer's Course and at Cornerstone (an intensive course required for all Commanders prior to assumption of command) about how to properly handle such reports and care for sexual assault survivors.

What is your understanding of the “continuum of harm” in the context of sexual harassment and sexual assault and their effects on the readiness of military units?

The importance of the continuum of harm lies in our prevention efforts. It is important to support and encourage a military climate of dignity and respect to promote protective factors and reduce risk factors. By teaching Marines skills, we will reduce problematic behaviors within the continuum of harm, such as gender-focused jokes, sexual comments, inappropriate behavior, threats, and non-consensual sexual behavior. Any behavior other than professionalism is counter to our Marine Corps values, negatively impacts mission readiness and lethality, and is completely unacceptable.

What is your view of the role of the chain of command in maintaining a command climate in which sexual harassment and sexual assault are not tolerated?

The Commander and those in the chain of command set the command climate within a unit. Leaders at each level must set the example. They must be committed to maintaining an environment that treats its members with dignity and respect and that does not tolerate sexual harassment or sexual assault.

In your view, do military and civilian leaders in the Marine Corps have the training, authorities, and resources needed to hold subordinate commanders and supervisors accountable for the prevention of and response to sexual harassment and sexual assault? If not, what additional training, authorities, or resources do you believe are needed, and why?

Marine leaders have the training and tools they need to hold subordinates accountable for failures to adequately address and respond to sexual harassment, sexual assault, or retaliation. In addition to receiving legal advice from their staff judge advocates, command staff members also include Equal Opportunity Advisors and Sexual Assault Response Coordinators who are subject matter experts on sexual harassment and sexual assault. These advisors enable Commanders to make sound and timely decisions in handling these types of cases.

If confirmed, what specific role and tasks would you establish for yourself in the Corps' program of preventing and responding to sexual harassment and sexual assault?

Just as unit commanders set priorities and serve as personal examples within their units, so does the Commandant of the Marine Corps for all Marines. This must remain a priority with constant vigilance and continuing education for Marines of all ranks across our Corps.

Why are the number of prosecutions for sexual assault and retaliation in the Marines Corps so low? Why are conviction rates so low?

Sexual assault and retaliation cases are some of the most complex and challenging cases to prosecute, and the Marine Corps takes each and every report seriously. Marine Commanders take appropriate action in sexual assault cases where a victim wishes to proceed, an investigation is complete, an offender is identified, and we have jurisdiction over the offender.

Mental and Behavioral Health Care

If confirmed, what actions would you take to ensure that sufficient mental and behavioral health resources are available to deployed and forward-based Marines, as well as to Marines and families at home station locations?

The Marine Corps will continue to provide mental and behavioral health resources to Marines deployed or forward-based, and to family members in need of them at home station locations. For example, when in operational settings, the Operational Stress Control and Readiness (OSCAR) program will continue to train Marines to identify those within their ranks who may be demonstrating signs of distress. OSCAR team members will continue to work closely with their Navy health care partners to provide a variety of support services that address every level of need. When in home station locations, the Community Counseling, Family Advocacy, and Substance Abuse Programs provide Marines and their Families a broad range of educational, preventative, and other non-medical counseling services. In both operational and home station settings, services may be accessible to Marines and their Families via telephonic, on-line, and face-to-face platforms by both civilian and active duty personnel. If confirmed, I will remain committed to ensuring mental and behavioral health services are readily available to our Marines and Sailors worldwide, as well as to their families on the home front. Current initiatives will significantly expand embedded mental health providers and enlisted behavioral health personnel within our operational forces; 115 new mental health billets are pending final approval to augment our existing capability. In support of our families, we continue to work with Navy Medicine on an enterprise-wide mental health laydown in order to properly meet the demand.

If confirmed, what specifically would you do to ensure that sufficient mental and behavioral health resources are available to Reserve Component Marines and their families who do not reside near a military base?

The Marine Corps ensures that mental and behavioral health resources are available to Reserve Marines and their families who do not reside near a military base. Our Psychological Health Outreach, DSTRESS, Military OneSource, Vet Center and Yellow Ribbon Programs are all available to Reservists and provide support throughout activation cycles and deployments. The Marine Corps is also working with the Navy, National Guard Bureau and Department of Veterans Affairs partners on providing mental and behavioral

health services to reserve and geographically dispersed Marines and their families throughout the country via face-to-face, telephonic and online platforms. If confirmed, I would continue these initiatives.

Although the Department has made great strides in reducing the stigma associated with help-seeking behaviors, many service members remain concerned that their military careers will be adversely affected should their chain of command become aware that they are seeking mental or behavioral health care. At the same time, the military chain of command has a legitimate need to be aware of physical and mental health conditions that may affect the readiness of the service members under their command.

As regards the provision of mental and behavioral health care, how does the Marine Corps bridge the gap between a Marine's desire for confidentiality and the chain of command's legitimate need to know about matters that may affect the readiness of the Marine and the unit?

In mental and behavioral health, trust and rapport are essential components in providing effective care. Confidentiality is crucial in establishing trust and rapport between Marines and their providers. The key to bridging the gap between the Marine's right to privacy and a command's "needs to know" is informed consent. Every mental and behavioral health provider educates Marines in need of their services about the Privacy Act and provides a discussion about informed consent. In cases where harm to self or others, abuse, or the presence of a service limiting condition are concerns, providers will convey to commands specific guidance and recommendations, to ensure the safety of the Marine and the larger community. Continued efforts to educate patients and commands about the limits of confidentiality are necessary to maintain the balance between readiness and privacy. Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 6490.08 "Command Notification Requirements to Dispel Stigma in Providing Mental Health Care to Service Members" clearly defines nine criteria under which a mental health provider shall disclose only the minimum information required. These criteria are carefully selected to protect privacy and avoid stigma while balancing a Commander's need to have situational awareness. Additionally, the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery has emphasized the importance of this topic by issuing a supporting memo, signed March 21, 2019, which reinforces the existing DoDI.

In your view, do non-medical counseling services provided by DOD Military Family Life Counselors have a role in promoting the readiness of Marines and their families?

Yes, I believe that Marine Corps Military and Family Life Counselors (MFLCs) have a role in promoting readiness as they are part of the continuum of non-medical care. The Marine Corps has child and youth, embedded, general, and school MFLCS. The MFLCs provide 'touch points' for families and quickly refer them to counselors if they have needs that cannot be readily resolved or when alternative care is required.

Commissary and Military Exchange Systems

If confirmed, would you support the consolidation of commissaries and the Service Exchanges into a single defense resale system?

I support efficiencies that help the MCX continue to provide benefits and vital operational support to Marines and families. The MCX is an integral, self-sustaining business component of MCCS. It delivers products and services to our Marines, whether in garrison or in expeditionary environments. It also produces a Non-Appropriated Funds (NAF) dividend for our MWR and family programs. The MCX is innovative, efficient, and remains committed to seeking additional efficiencies in order to further support our Marines, the MWR, and family programs on which they depend. If confirmed, I would support consolidation if it didn't result in a degradation of benefits and vital operational support to Marines and families.

In your view, how would such consolidation affect the quality and efficacy of Marine Corps family and MWR services?

Integration and organization planning must ensure that the MWR and family programs that support our Marines, and rely on the MCX-generated NAF dividend, are not impacted.

Legal Services

How are responsibilities for legal services allocated between the Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant and the Counsel for the Commandant?

The responsibilities of the Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant (SJA to CMC) and the Counsel for the Commandant (CL) are governed by statute and Department and Service regulations. The Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant (SJA to CMC) serves as the Commandant's senior uniformed legal advisor on all matters arising within the Marine Corps and on all matters arising from the Commandant's role as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The SJA to CMC provides legal advice, counsel, and guidance to the Commandant and Headquarters, Marine Corps staff and agencies on any matter that they may direct to him, or on any matter that the SJA to CMC determines should be brought to their attention. The SJA to CMC assists the CMC in the execution of Service-level Title 10 responsibilities to train, organize, and equip legal support essential to a global expeditionary force in readiness. The Counsel for the Commandant is a component of the Office of the General Counsel of the Navy, and provides legal advice to the Marine Corps in the areas of acquisition law, including international transactions, acquisition-related security cooperation matters, and acquisition integrity; arms control and international arms regulation; business and commercial law; real and personal property law; civilian personnel and labor law; fiscal law; environmental law; occupational safety and health law; intellectual property law; Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act law; legislation; and such other legal services as may be assigned to support the mission of the Navy and the Marine Corps. Intelligence law and oversight of intelligence activities, intelligence-related activities, special access programs,

sensitive activities, ethics and standards of conduct, and cyber law are shared responsibilities between SJA to CMC and Counsel for the Commandant.

How would you modify the allocation of these responsibilities, if confirmed?

No modification is necessary. Department-level regulation governing the allocation of responsibilities is in the final stages of revision and will soon be updated. The Department regulation governing the duties of Counsel for the Commandant was also recently updated. No significant changes concerning the allocation of responsibilities were made in the revision process to either instruction.

Who has responsibility for providing legal advice on military justice matters in the Marine Corps?

The SJA to CMC has statutory authority and responsibility to provide legal advice on military justice matters to the Commandant and Headquarters Marine Corps staff, and for inspecting and ensuring the proper administration of military justice. Marine judge advocates advising Commanders outside Headquarters Marine Corps do so under the professional supervision of the SJA to CMC.

What is the role, if any, of the Counsel for the Commandant in making duty assignments for Marine Corps judge advocates?

Statutory responsibility over the assignment of Marine Corps judge advocates rests with the Commandant, who exercises that authority through Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, with the advice of SJA to CMC. Counsel for the Commandant has no role in the assignment of Marine Corps judge advocates. In assignments of judge advocates to the Counsel for the Commandant offices, the Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs and the SJA to CMC work cooperatively with the Counsel for the Commandant.

What is your view of the need for the Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant to provide independent legal advice to the Commandant of the Marine Corps?

A Commandant's access to independent legal advice from the SJA to CMC is essential to the Marine Corps. The importance of that independent advice is reflected in the statute (10 U.S.C. 8046) which prohibits interference with that advice by other persons within DoD.

What is your view of the responsibility of Marine Corps judge advocates to provide independent legal advice to Marine Corps commanders?

Independent advice by Marine Corps judge advocates is as important to Commanders as it is to the Commandant. In the last 18 years of combat operations, a Commander's access to the independent legal advice of Marine judge advocates has proven so critical to our success that it was recently made doctrine: "The role of a judge advocate within a staff is to help generate and maintain tempo for a Commander through the application of timely, correct,

and complete legal advice.” Having independent legal advice helps our Commanders to make the best decisions possible.

Officer Personnel Management System Reforms

The John S. McCain NDAA for FY 2019 contained several provisions to modernize the officer personnel management system. These reforms were designed to align officer career management with the priorities outlined in the 2018 NDS.

How is the Marine Corps implementing these authorities today and to what effect?

The Marine Corps plans to use lineal list flexibility for the Fiscal Year 2021 (Summer 2019) Active Unrestricted Colonel through Major promotion boards. We are evaluating the use of other authorities, to include constructive credit and opt out, as we determine methods to modernize our officer management processes.

If confirmed, how would you lead the Marine Corps in further leveraging these new authorities?

Talent management for all Marines, enlisted, officer, and civilian, will be a top priority. If confirmed, I intend to reinforce our current efforts and to emphasize leveraging new authorities when it enhances lethality and warfighting readiness.

Are there other authorities that the Marine Corps needs in order to modernize the management of its officer personnel?

The Marine Corps is exploring the usage and implementation of additional authorities granted in the FY19 NDAA as well as new authorities that may be required to optimize our officer career management. We appreciate Congress’ continued support to provide the Services with the officer management flexibilities.

Joint Officer Management

The NDAA for FY 2017 modified the Joint Qualified Officer (JQO) system established by the Goldwater-Nichols Act in two significant ways. First, it broadened the statutory definition of “joint matters” to expand the types of positions for which an officer can receive joint duty credit. Further, it reduced from three years to two the minimum tour length required for joint duty credit.

What is your assessment of the effectiveness of the FY 2017 modifications to the JQO system?

The recent modifications to the JQO system have been effective. They have allowed for greater flexibility in the officer assignment process, improving the Marine Corps' ability to support joint requirements while balancing important service considerations. Greater assignment flexibility facilitates optimal career progression and service requirements while fully-supporting the joint force.

In your view, are the requirements associated with becoming a JQO, and the link between attaining joint qualification and eligibility for promotion to Flag officer rank, consistent with the operational and professional demands of Marine Corps officers?

Yes. The systematic and progressive career-long development of officers in joint matters is vital to ensuring that officers serving as general and flag officers have the requisite experience and education in joint matters. The joint employment concepts and broader designs of "jointness" that involves interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational participants provide key insights and vital experiences for Marine Corps officers in support of joint warfighting capability and lethality.

In your view, what additional modifications, if any, to JQO prerequisites are necessary to ensure that Marine Corps officers are able to attain both meaningful joint and Corps-specific leadership experience and adequate professional development?

No additional modifications of the JQO prerequisites are recommended. We do believe that access to JPME-II officer education opportunities is vital to support joint education requirements and ensuring the Marine Corps maximizes the number of officers designated as joint qualified.

Professional Military Education

The 2018 NDS asserts that Professional Military Education (PME) has stagnated—that it focuses more on the accomplishment of mandatory credit at the expense of lethality and ingenuity.

If confirmed, what actions would you take to enhance the Marine Corps PME system to ensure that it fosters the education and development of a strategic thinkers and planners with both the intellectual and military leadership acumen to merit promotion to General Officer?

Professional Military Education, and more broadly professional development, is an essential element of the institutional ethos of the Marine Corps. As articulated in our seminal doctrinal publication Warfighting, PME is designed to develop leaders who have the analytical skills and critical thinking abilities to adapt quickly and creatively in any environment. In short, our ability to execute our warfighting philosophy is dependent upon a well-educated and professional force. The Commanding General of Education Command, dual-hatted as the President of Marine Corps University (MCU), is responsible for all Marine Corps PME

programs, to include officer and enlisted resident and non-resident programs. Over the past several years, MCU has undertaken several specific initiatives to improve and enhance PME within the Marine Corps. If confirmed, PME will remain a priority and I will reinforce these successes and encourage all efforts to adapt PME to meet the demands of the future operating environment. As an extension of the Secretary of the Navy's "Education for Seapower" initiative, I will be heavily engaged in supporting the Secretary's goal of furthering the professional development of Marines. In accordance with its mission and my intent, MCU will continue to enhance the intellectual capacity of the Corps by arming future leaders with the military judgment, critical thinking, and creative problem-solving skills necessary to out-think, as well as out-fight, their opponents.

Religious Accommodation

U.S. military personnel routinely deploy to locations around the world where they must engage and work effectively with allies and with host-country nationals whose faiths and belief systems may be different than their own. For many other cultures, religious faith is not a purely personal and private matter; it is the foundation of culture and society. Learning to respect the different faiths and beliefs of others, and to understand how accommodating different views can contribute to a ready force is, some would argue, essential to operational effectiveness.

In your view, do current Marine Corps policies and processes properly facilitate the free exercise of religion, without impinging on the rights of those who have different religious beliefs, including no religious beliefs?

Yes. Current religious accommodation policies are sufficient. They strike a balance between individual expression of belief and the needs of the Marine Corps to maintain good order and discipline, unit cohesion, military readiness, and combat effectiveness.

In your view, do Marine Corps policies and processes appropriately accommodate religious practices as mandated by the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and the NDAA's for FYs 2013 and 2014? Why or why not?

Yes. Our policies seek to balance the needs of the individual Marine with the needs of the Marine Corps.

Do you support a policy that allows a prospective recruit to request and receive an accommodation of religious practices prior to enlisting or accepting a commission in the Marine Corps?

No. Each accommodation is judged on the unique set of circumstances of the Marine making the request and the requirements of their military operational specialty and/or assignment. Our recruit training model takes individuals and transforms them into members of a team. Military readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health, and safety are

key elements of mission accomplishment. An essential part of unit cohesion is establishing and maintaining uniform military grooming and appearance standards.

Do you support a policy that allows a Marine’s religious accommodation, once granted, to follow the Marine throughout his/her military career—no matter where he/she is stationed or the nature of his/her specific duties, unless it can be demonstrated that the accommodation adversely affects military mission accomplishment?

No. Each accommodation is judged on the unique set of circumstances of the Marine making the request. This set of circumstances changes when a Marine moves to a different duty station or different billet.

In your view, does a military climate that welcomes and respects open and candid discussions about personal religious faith and beliefs in a home station environment contribute to preparing U.S. forces to be more effective in overseas assignments?

I believe current religious accommodation and freedom policies strike a balance between individual expression of belief and the needs of the Marine Corps to maintain good order and discipline, unit cohesion, military readiness, and combat effectiveness.

Do you believe that allowing Marines of certain faiths—such as Sikh, Orthodox Judaism, or Islam—to maintain beards or wear turbans or other religious headwear, while in uniform, strengthens or weakens the U.S. military’s standing in areas of the world where such religions predominate? Would such allowance help or hurt U.S. efforts to build alliances and partnerships with such nations?

I believe current religious accommodation and freedom policies strike a balance between individual expression of belief and the needs of the Marine Corps to maintain good order and discipline, unit cohesion, military readiness, and combat effectiveness.

In your view, do existing Marine Corps policies and practices regarding public prayers offered by a military chaplain in both official and unofficial settings, strike the proper balance between a chaplain’s right to pray in accordance with the tenets of his/her religious faith and the rights of other service members who may hold with different beliefs, including no religious beliefs, who may be present in these settings?

I believe current policies strike the proper balance. Chaplains advise the commander on the inclusion of religious elements. Prayers offered by chaplains at command events are offered consistent with the chaplain’s faith. They are included at the commander’s discretion. Chaplains are not obligated to pray at such events.

Senior Executive Service (SES) and General Officer Reductions

The FY17 NDAA limited the number of DOD SES and General/Flag Officers by about

12%.

What progress has the Marine Corps made in reducing the number of SES and General Officers in accordance with plans previously provided to Congress?

The Marine Corps has only 23 SES in the entire service, which make up less than 0.2% of the civilian workforce. However, these are in key foundational leadership positions critical to mission stability and accomplishment.

The DOD Civilian Personnel Workforce

DOD is the federal government's largest employer of civilian personnel. The vast majority of DOD civilian personnel policies comport with requirements set forth in title 5 of the U.S. Code, and corresponding regulations under the purview of the Office of Personnel Management. Although this Committee does not have jurisdiction over title 5, over the years, it has provided numerous extraordinary hiring and management authorities applicable to specific segments of the DOD civilian workforces.

In your judgment, what is the biggest challenge facing DOD in effectively and efficiently managing its civilian workforce?

One of our greatest challenges is competing with the private sector for talent. Although we are employing many of the new hiring authorities provided by Congress, there are still policies and procedures in place that unnecessarily delay bringing on new hires. Competitive pay and limited hiring incentives are also challenges that impact our ability to attract and retain top talent.

In your view, do Marine Corps supervisors have adequate authorities to divest of a civilian employee whose performance of duty fails to meet standards or who engages in misconduct? If so, are Marine Corps civilian and military supervisors adequately trained to exercise of such authorities? If not, what additional authorities or training do Marine Corps supervisors require?

Yes, there are adequate authorities to address civilian employees whose performance is not acceptable or who engages in misconduct. However, they are complicated and not comprehensively understood. More intensive, in-depth training on the law, rules, and regulations that govern performance and conduct actions to ensure supervisors are properly trained and advised of their options and how to best execute those options. Even when supervisors are well-versed in their options, they may be hesitant to take action because of the threat of litigation which could go on for months, if not years, and could have an adverse effect on their career. Having appeals/grievances decided internally through a component "appeal board" rather than through an outside third party (arbitrator or merit systems protection board) is worth considering.

Do you advocate the creation of a new “title 10” DOD civilian workforce and a concomitant body of title 10 personnel authorities applicable only to the DOD civilian workforce? If so, what should be the key components of this new body of personnel law, and how should it improve on title 5, in your view?

DoD implemented the Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System (DCIPS), a title 10 workforce, over 20 years ago. Additionally, DoD is currently transitioning the Cyber workforce to Cyber Excepted Service (CES), another title 10 workforce. These two efforts support the flexibility needed for national defense in critical areas. Transitioning additional civilian workforce to title 10 is something worth considering.

Under current law, the civilian pay raise to adjust for wage inflation is set at the Employment Cost Index (ECI) minus 0.5 percent, or, about a 2.6 percent increase for FY2020. Yet, the Department’s budget does not provide funding for this civilian pay increase, despite the largest topline defense budget request in the Nation’s history.

Do you personally support a pay raise for the Navy’s civilian employees, consistent with current law?

I support pay raises for the Navy’s civilian employees, but these must be balanced with the other priorities consistent with the President’s budget.

Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress receive timely testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch.

Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress?

Yes.

Do you agree, if confirmed, and when asked before this committee, its subcommittees, or other appropriate committees of Congress to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the position of the Administration?

Yes.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic

communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner?

Yes.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you?

Yes.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided?

Yes.

Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request?

Yes.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee?

Yes.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress?

Yes.