

**RECORD VERSION**

**STATEMENT BY**

**LIEUTENANT GENERAL GEORGE A. CROCKER  
COMMANDER, I CORPS AND FORT LEWIS  
FORT LEWIS, WASHINGTON  
UNITED STATES ARMY**

**BEFORE THE**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
MILITARY READINESS**

**SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

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**READINESS**

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**Lieutenant General George A. Crocker**  
**Commanding General**  
**I Corps and Fort Lewis**

Lieutenant General George A. Crocker was commissioned a lieutenant of infantry following his graduation from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point NY, in 1966.

He has served in a number of command and staff positions both overseas and in the United States. He served four overseas tours, including two in Vietnam and one each in Germany and Panama. In Vietnam, he served as a rifle platoon leader with the U.S. 9th Infantry Division Mobile Riverine Force in 1967-68 and as an advisor to the Vietnamese 42nd Ranger Battalion, 1970-71. He also commanded rifle companies in the 82nd Airborne Division and 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry (Mechanized), U.S. Army Europe.

Lieutenant General Crocker has served five tours in the 82nd Airborne Division with duties as company, battalion, brigade, and division commander, as well as battalion, brigade, division operations officer and battalion and brigade executive officer and division chief of staff. As commander of 1-505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, he deployed on operation URGENT FURY as part of the U.S. rescue operation to Grenada. In 1988, while commanding 1st Brigade, he deployed to Honduras as commander of a four-battalion U.S. Show of Force in Operation Golden Pheasant; and in 1989, Lieutenant General Crocker was Chief of Staff during the planning and execution of Operation JUST CAUSE in Panama.

Lieutenant General Crocker's other assignments include: Department of Tactics, U.S. Military Academy; Force Development Officer, Office of the Deputy Chief of

**Staff for Operations and Plans in the Pentagon; and Executive Officer to the Commanding General, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.**

**Lieutenant General Crocker commanded the Special Operations Command, Pacific, at Camp H.M. Smith, Hawaii; served as Commanding General U.S. Army South, in Panama; and prior to assuming command of I Corps, served as Commander, 82nd Airborne Division.**

**Lieutenant General Crocker holds a Bachelor's degree from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, NY and a Master's Degree from Duke University in Durham, NC. He is a graduate of the Infantry Advance Course, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and U.S. Army War College. His military schools include Airborne, Ranger, Pathfinder and the Jumpmaster Course.**

**Lieutenant General Crocker's awards and decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal (OLC), Silver Star, Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit (OLC), Bronze Star (OLC), Purple Heart, Ranger Tab, Combat Infantryman's Badge, Master Parachutist Badge, Argentine, British, Thai, and Venezuelan Parachutist Badges and Vietnamese Ranger Badge, and the Army General Staff Identification Badge.**

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COMMANDER, I CORPS AND FORT LEWIS**

**Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the Senate Armed Services Committee.**

**Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you to testify on behalf of the soldiers, family members, and civilians of I Corps and Fort Lewis, Washington.**

**I Corps**

**I Corps is unique among the three continental United States (CONUS) Corps in that it has no assigned active Army divisions in peacetime and is composed of a balance of Active and Reserve base units in peacetime and wartime. It is further unique in that it is under the Combatant Command of U.S. Pacific Command and under the Operational Control of U.S. Army Pacific. As it is CONUS-based, it relies on U.S. Army Forces Command for Title 10 U.S. Code support, or in Joint terminology, is Administratively Controlled (ADCON) to Forces Command.**

**War plans for I Corps include the Defense of Korea or the Defense of Japan. As a U.S. PACOM major operational headquarters, I Corps is designated by CINCPAC as a standing Joint Task Force (JTF) for theater-wide contingencies. The other primary PACOM standing JTF's are 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet in Yokosuka, Japan, and III MEF in Okinawa, Japan. Thus, I Corps' readiness responsibilities range from conventional Corps roles in a medium-intensity conflict to a full spectrum of missions as a USPACOM JTF.**

## **Active Component/Reserve Component Nature of I Corps**

**I Corps base units include approximately 20,000 active-duty soldiers at Fort Lewis, Washington, and an equal number of U.S. Army Reserve and National Guard soldiers based in many of the fifty states. Thus I Corps' name, "America's Corps!" While I Corps is not directly responsible for the readiness of the RC units, we do coordinate with the U.S. Army Reserve Command and the states' Adjutant Generals to articulate the wartime requirements and anticipated missions for these Corps base units. We believe we have an excellent working and training relationship with these units, and carefully integrate our Reserve Component subordinate units into all plans. Many of our Reserve Component units participate in I Corps' exercises in CONUS and overseas, including exercises in Japan and Thailand. I Corps' Reserve Component units participated in Operations Joint Guard and Able Sentry. I Corps is at the forefront of the integration of Active Component and Reserve Component units. Our military intelligence brigade and our engineer group each contain organic Reserve Component subordinate units. We are one of two organizations in America's Army sponsoring the Integrated Infantry Battalion Experiment which will test the ability of integrated Active Component and Reserve Component combat arms units to train and deploy on operational missions. We also work hard to maintain good relationships with the geographically proximate Pacific Northwest enhanced separate brigades from Washington and Oregon.**

**Notwithstanding this Active Component/Reserve Component nature, my testimony regarding readiness refers only to the approximately 20,000 active duty soldiers at Fort Lewis, Washington. In addition to the Fort Lewis Corps base brigades, two maneuver brigades are also I Corps' responsibility. They are the 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Brigade 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade 2d Infantry Division – whose parent Divisions are in Hawaii and Korea, respectively.**

## **Readiness**

**In defining readiness, I endorse the notion that readiness is more than training readiness. Readiness has additional components of Infrastructure and Quality of Life. Without the requisite infrastructure or physical assets, such as the barracks, housing, motor pools, maintenance facilities, training ranges, training devices and maneuver land, we cannot train and field a battle-ready force. Similarly, without an accompanying appropriate quality of life, we will not be able to retain our Army. Quality of life is not totally quantifiable; it includes, but is not limited to pay, compensation and benefits, health care, housing, community/family support programs, stability and predictability, educational and retirement benefits. The cumulative effect of Quality of Life is a feeling that “it’s worth it,” and that your country cares about you and your family’s total needs. I will address Fort Lewis’ readiness in these three components.**

## **Training Readiness**

**In a word, our training readiness is satisfactory. Units are trained and ready. I am very confident that I Corps units can accomplish their collective wartime missions. This is demonstrated by the superb soldiers who routinely deploy world-wide in support of the Army’s missions. Like the other Corps, we, too, deploy units and individuals to Central America, Europe, Bosnia, the Middle East, Korea, Japan, and Thailand. We have supported Intrinsic Action with a medical evacuation unit for the past 18 months. We have supported Joint Guard and Joint Forge with a civil affairs unit, a public affairs detachment, and a postal unit. I Corps provided a medical evacuation unit for Operation Desert Thunder. We sent an engineer unit to Able Sentry. We have provided medical and engineer**

units to support disaster relief in El Salvador and Guam after hurricanes. I Corps participated in joint exercise Cobra Gold in Thailand last year, and will again this year in May. We conduct a bilateral exercise in Japan every January. We participated in two exercises in Korea; Foal Eagle and Ulchi Focus Lens. We sent a unit to Exercise Rainbow Serpent in Australia. I Corps supported Joint Task Force 6 in Texas with engineer units on two occasions. We have provided engineer units to road construction projects in Alaska and New Mexico. We have sent a military police company to provide force protection to other U.S. Army units in Panama for six months. We have provided soldiers for Operation Desert Victory, Exercise Northern Edge, Joint Task Forces in Honduras and El Salvador, United Nations observer missions in Africa, the U.S. Support Group in Haiti, and in support of the U.S. Customs Service. In every case, I receive reports of superb performances from the supported commands. Our trained and ready status is also reflected in the excellence demonstrated at NTC and JRTC rotations and other external evaluations.

However, I would state that while training readiness is satisfactory today, during my two years as I Corps' Commander, that has not always been the case. Further, I would characterize today's training readiness as fragile. Let me first discuss where we have been in readiness, then further describe today's fragility.

### **1997-1998**

If you had asked me to testify in 1997, I would have reported serious problems in readiness. We had crippling shortages in infantrymen, with as many as 19 of 54 rifle squads totally unmanned, and a lesser number partially manned. The shortage was in the MOS 11B10: skill level one, privates or riflemen. The shortage carried over to 11M, the Bradley or mechanized Infantryman to the extent that a number of Bradley Fighting Vehicles sat unmanned. Anti-tank

sections in the light infantry were virtually non-existent. If you had asked me to testify last fall (1998), I would have reported that the shortage of infantrymen had been fixed, but I was now predicting a shortfall of training dollars for 1999 such that the heavy maneuver brigade would be C3 or have significant readiness shortfalls by March or April. That picture was based on the bleak money forecasted for Fort Lewis in FY99, and is consistent with what I reported to General Bramlett in writing last year. I am now able to report a plus-up of several million dollars for training that will carry us through 1999 at the appropriate levels.

I stated current readiness is fragile. Please allow me to explain the fragility, as you won't find that in any Unit Status Report categories. As a fighting force, we should be robust, resilient, and possess redundant capabilities so that we fight in accordance with our doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures.

We are first and foremost fragile in people. Despite above 90% overall levels of fill, our units experience shortfalls in low-density or specialty skill MOS's. (e.g., 63B Light-wheel vehicle mechanic, 80% aggregate; 95B Military Police, 86% aggregate; 31 series MOS Communications speciality, 83 % aggregate) If you are short key sergeants or enlisted personnel in supply, maintenance, communications, or others, then these areas do not pull their own weight; rather they burden the unit with inefficiencies and take an inordinate amount of leader time and focus away from mainstream activities. Who among us wants to send our son or daughter into combat with less than a full team? In sports terms, there is no bench; no depth on the player roster. There is no one to punt the ball if the starting kicker is injured.

## **Quality of Life**

**As I stated up front, Quality of Life is not absolutely quantifiable. It is the totality of the soldier's and his/her family's Army experience. Pay, medical benefits, housing on base, services, benefits, stability, predictability and the amount of time the soldier is away from home (PERSTEMPO) are all important components of Quality of Life. Which component is most important depends upon the individual's personal situation.**

**I believe that all of these factors are relative to the qualities or job benefits found in civilian life and are compared on that basis. When the American economy is strong, and better-paying jobs with stability and benefits are available, and the mom or dad is not excessively away from home, then the Army's Quality of Life is both a perceived and a real readiness issue. I stated that Quality of Life is not quantifiable. While that is true, some of the elements of Quality of Life are attributable to our budgets. Without adequate funding, our bases wither and deteriorate, services are curtailed, and morale and readiness suffer. During my tenure at Fort Lewis, we have had a consistent downward trend in overall funding with no reduction of tasks and missions.**

**I must conclude that today, Army Quality of Life at Fort Lewis is clearly in a decline. Soldiers and their families see this decline and say if it's this bad now and getting worse, I'll get out of the army before Quality of Life is totally unacceptable. We must reverse this decline or be prepared for even more readiness problems. The anticipated increase in pay and retirement benefits in the FY00 budget is great news. Soldiers will respond positively to this real increase in benefits. It will send the message their leaders care.**

## **Infrastructure**

**Fort Lewis is a national treasure in terms of its infrastructure. Fort Lewis' proximity to rail hubs, deep-water ports, and its collocation with McChord Air Force Base make it a natural choice for power projection. Together Fort Lewis and our sub-base, Yakima Training Center in Yakima, Washington, provide premiere light and heavy training grounds with a combined area of 409,827 acres. Fort Lewis and Yakima can handle brigade or divisional maneuvers and can support M1A1 tank live-fire from individual gunnery tables to battalion task force combined arms air-ground live-fires. At present our buildings and facilities support a base line of training, maintenance and living needs. A world-class Army deserves world-class facilities. Fort Lewis is a great place, but its infrastructure is not uniformly world-class.**

**To keep Fort Lewis with its buildings, grounds, and training areas properly maintained requires far more dollars than we are given. In short, Base Operations and Real Property Maintenance, the keys to having excellence in infrastructure, are broken.**

**Since funding is directly tied to infrastructure, let me address Fort Lewis' funding; and I believe it will give you insight into not only infrastructure, but also the Quality of Life and training components of readiness.**

**From FY95 to FY99, funding for recurring operations; i.e., those budget dollars Fort Lewis receives on a recurring basis, has decreased. Let me explain what this means in terms of what I can and cannot do in FY99.**

## **Can Do**

- **Train all Force Support Package 1 (first-to-fight) units to C1**
- **Train all other units to Authorized Level of Organization (lowest acceptable in “band of excellence”)**
- **Maintain minimum Base Operations (keep the lights on)**
- **Provide child care services at FY98 levels**
- **Maintain health and safety standards**
- **Avoid significant environmental penalties**
- **Accomplish 25% of the FY99 Facilities Reduction Program (World War II wood tear-down)**
- **Perform routine short-term facility maintenance**
- **Support the Army’s ROTC Advanced Camp at FY98 level.**

## **Cannot Do**

- **Train to a high degree or band of excellence in all units**
- **Buy needed M1A1/Bradley track replacement for 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade 2d Infantry Division**
- **Conduct a Corps Command Post Exercise, “Cascade Mist,” to maintain core competencies after the summer turn-over of staff personnel**
- **Make major or significant unscheduled repairs to facilities**
- **Improve or upgrade facilities in a timely manner**

**Another resource indicator is the loss of civilian employees. If you were to look back at Fort Lewis pre-Desert Storm to the present, FY90-99, you would find the supported military population virtually the same. During the same period, we have lost significant civilian employee authorizations, and authorizations for**

**military personnel that perform Table of Distribution and Allowances (non-warfighting) duties. This has the effect of slowing services, repairs and programs that enhance our quality of life.**

**I am forced to use borrowed military manpower to make up the shortages. Were you to come to Fort Lewis, you would find soldiers manning grass-cutting work parties, soldiers working in our gymnasiums and sports facilities, and other non MOS duties. I narrowly avoided putting large details of soldiers back washing pots and pans in Mess Halls in order to save additional precious dollars. Since soldiers do not join the Army to cut grass, issue volleyballs or wash dishes, I think you can see the morale, readiness and retention implications. I wish I had better news. Our current estimates place Base Operations funding below our needs, and Real Property Maintenance significantly below needs.**

## **Summary**

**In summary, let me re-state that in terms of I Corps' ability to perform its wartime missions – our soldiers and units are trained and ready. I Corps units reflect the excellence of the best Army in the world. Quality of Life is in a decline, and that decline is recognized by our soldiers and their families. We must reverse this trend now. The current state of infrastructure is unsatisfactory. If we are to have a Fort Lewis at which our children and grandchildren would be proud to serve, infrastructure must be fixed and maintained, now and in the future. In closing, let me say that in no way should any of my remarks be construed as derogatory toward our soldiers. Fort Lewis' soldiers are proud to serve and reflect that pride and professionalism in their daily lives. They are the world's best – and we absolutely must provide them with the world's best leadership, facilities, quality of life and support. Thank you for all you have done for us in the past – on behalf of all of us at Fort Lewis, thank you in advance for your support in the months and years to come.**

