

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION
UNTIL RELEASED BY
THE SENATE ARMED
SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**STATEMENT OF
LIEUTENANT GENERAL GARRY L. PARKS
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
DEPUTY COMMANDANT FOR MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS
AND
MAJOR GENERAL JERRY D. HUMBLE
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
COMMANDING GENERAL,
MARINE CORPS RECRUITING COMMAND
BEFORE THE
PERSONNEL SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
20 MARCH 2002
ON
RECRUITING AND RETENTION**

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION
UNTIL RELEASED BY
THE SENATE ARMED
SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee:

We are pleased to appear before you today to provide a recruiting and retention overview of your Marine Corps. Your commitment to increasing the warfighting and crisis response capabilities of our Nation's armed forces and to improving the quality of life of our Marines is central to the strength your Marine Corps enjoys today. We thank you for your effort in ensuring that Marines and their families were poised to respond to the Nation's call in the aftermath of the events of September 11, 2001, in a manner Americans expect of their Corps. The Marine Corps achieved its recruiting and retention goals for FY01. We recruited 37,335 non-prior service Regular and Reserve Marines, with 96.3% being high school graduates, as well as 1610 new commissioned officers. Additionally, the Marine Corps will meet both enlisted and officer recruiting objectives for FY02.

RECRUITING OVERVIEW

Mr. Chairman, as we begin this report about your Marine Corps' recruiting efforts, I would like to thank you and your colleagues for supplementing our advertising funds over the past two years. Put simply, it was money that produced success. This added financial support is enabling us to affect more awareness of the Marine Corps in America's youth, which in turn yields more of the result we desire – attracting and recruiting the Nation's finest young men and women to the Marines. These results are tangible, as evidenced in the success we have enjoyed over the past year. Additionally, we would like to thank you for the extraordinary legislative efforts aimed at increasing recruiter access to high schools and colleges. This emphasis will assist in bridging the gap between the educational system and the military. With your continued support, we

will overcome the increasing challenges of this very demanding, but vital business of National Defense.

FY01 Update

It is important that we update you on key recruiting projects initiated last year -- the Marine Corps Recruiting Information Support System-Recruiting Station (MCRISS-RS), our web-based initiatives, and our nationwide restructuring effort. Put in place at the end of FY2001, MCRISS-RS replaced a twenty-year-old mainframe system that merely captured information on applicants after enlistment. The new system allows users to capture data electronically, just as soon as an applicant declares they would like to become a Marine. MCRISS-RS is streamlining the entire enlistment process and providing immediate benefits in man-hour savings by eliminating redundant data entry and improving the speed and quality of information available.

Our totally revamped web-based recruiting tools continue to successfully target the population interested in opportunities as an enlisted Marine in *Marines.com* and for commissioning opportunities, *Marineofficer.com*. Our aim is to attract, engage, and encourage those qualified applicants to register their contact information. We believe that individuals who are influenced by our advertising will actively seek out these sites to pursue more information on opportunities than those who receive direct mail. Both these sites are focused in scope: to attract prospects to recruiters. Our increased emphasis with initial electronic contact is to maximize a personal one-on-one exchange between a recruiter and a prospect. That is, we do not seek to replace Marine recruiters with virtual recruiters.

To ensure that our recruiters are given equal opportunities to be successful, we continue to adapt our recruiting force. This nationwide optimization effort balances recruiter areas of responsibility, based on a distribution of assets among the two recruiting regions, six recruiting districts and forty-eight recruiting stations. The final phase of this current effort is planned for execution in FY03.

FY02 Prognosis

For almost seven years, the extraordinary efforts of Marines assigned to recruiting duty have successively forged a formidable reputation of recruiting high quality people to transform into America's Marines. In FY01, the Marine Corps Recruiting Command attained 103 percent of enlisted recruiting objectives and 100 percent of officer accession requirements. Nevertheless, despite our previous successes, it is essential that the command not rest on its laurels. Recruiting is a battle that must be won every day. Meeting our accession requirements is difficult work and will become increasingly more difficult as time progresses. Therefore, to ensure continued success in recruiting young men and women of character, we have focused our recruiting initiatives in four strategic areas:

1. Exploit success through focused leadership, selecting the Corps' best for recruiting duty and innovative marketing;
2. Achieve the next level of organizational efficiency and effectiveness with a renewed emphasis on fiscal accountability and comprehensive organizational review and restructure;
3. Recruit our recruiters, making recruiting a duty where Marines want to be assigned; and

4. Improve safety and quality of life for Marines and families.

Exploiting Success

The cornerstone of any organization rests in the strength of its leadership. This is particularly critical in our recruiting stations, and the Marine Corps takes pride in placing great leaders in these positions. As an illustration of this fact, twenty-four percent of the current general officers in the Marine Corps have served on recruiting duty. To serve in this environment brings out the best in Marines and enhances leadership qualities and traits requisite for expeditionary operational command. We believe that the Recruiting Station Commanders are our strategic centers of gravity, and that the Officer Selection Officers, and the Recruiting Sub-Station Commanders are our tactical centers of gravity in the continuous battle to achieve the recruiting mission. To support this belief we handpick all Recruiting Station Commanders using a command selection board. Additionally, focusing education, training, and support to these key individuals reinforces successful leadership and ensures our continued success. To this end, we have completely overhauled our training to include a new Commanders Course for Recruiting Station Commanders. These efforts and initiatives have produced unprecedented quality as evidenced by a 1.9% and 4.5% increase in high school graduates and upper mental group attainment, respectively, compared to this time last year.

FY01 High School Grads 96.3%	FY01 Mental Group I-III: 63.8%
------------------------------	--------------------------------

FY02 High School Grads 97.2%	FY02 Mental Group I-III: 68.3%
------------------------------	--------------------------------

A residual effect from this success has been a steady, albeit small, increase in early mission attainment, further enhancing our recruiters' quality of life.

The next tenet to exploiting success is innovative marketing, stretching every advertising dollar to maximize awareness. At first glance, because of the high level of

patriotism, it appeared that increased interest in military service stemming from September 11th might add to the number of qualified individuals seeking military service. There is no evidence, however, to indicate that this perception has translated into an easier recruiting environment. In the weeks immediately following the terrorist attacks, we did see a surge in overall interest in military service. However, that increased interest was very short lived. In fact, according to Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) polls, propensity levels in subsequent weeks indicate that individuals expressing interest in joining the military when asked have remained relatively constant since September 11th.

In light of this fact, it is imperative that we continue to seek ways to exploit the success we have enjoyed by delivering the Marine Corps' message to America's populace in new and innovative ways. From our new television commercial campaign, labeled "The Climb," to what can be described as "guerilla marketing" techniques in other areas, we continue to spread our brand messages of "Transformation of Young People" and "Tough, Smart, Elite, Warrior," to the American people. "The Climb" marks a turning point in our advertising campaigns in that it not only portrays enlisted Marines, but also features a female Marine. It is also designed to appeal to the new millennial generation that has recently come of military enlistment age. This is achieved by illustrating our humanitarian capabilities in addition to our strong warfighting heritage. An example of our guerilla marketing techniques would be the recognition of our birthday broadcast on CNN this past November. Regardless of the medium, the aim is simple and constant -- to exploit success and make our dollars have more impact.

To gain increased awareness in minority circles, we continue to participate in several minority workshops and media events such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), National Council of La Raza (NCLR), and The Society of Mexican American Engineers and Scientists (MAES). Furthermore, we are increasing our involvement with the fraternities and sororities of historically black colleges and universities as well as canvassing marquee-sporting events like the Bayou Classic and the College Inter-Athletic Association. We believe this, combined with advertisements in publications such as *People En Espanol* and *Ebony*, will further elevate awareness of the Marine Corps and provide a rich recruiting venue.

Achieve the Next Level of Organizational Efficiency and Effectiveness

As with any organization (regardless of how successful it may be) there is always room to increase efficiency and effectiveness. Consequently, the Marine Corps Recruiting Command has conducted an internal analysis of its organizational structure as well as its current business practices.

In an effort to maximize our overall effectiveness, we have structurally reorganized our headquarters staff as well as our command relationship with our two Recruiting Regions in a way that more supports unity of command and unity of effort. After detailed internal analysis, we have eliminated redundant responsibilities within the command and created new ones commensurate with operational staff models and contemporary staffing requirements. This restructuring has created better visibility on critical staff functions, increased accountability, streamlined staff work, and ultimately provided better support to the recruiters out on the street.

We have increased fiscal efficiency with more utilization of available military transport aircraft for long distance travel, increased usage of ground transportation, and utilization of video teleconferencing. As an illustration of these efforts, we have decreased our headquarters' temporary additional duty travel spending nearly 50% compared to the 1st quarter of last year.

Recruit the Recruiter

Our data clearly shows that volunteers succeed at a higher rate than those who are ordered to the task of recruiting. To achieve the Marine recruiting mission in today's recruiting environment is not an easy task and is one that ultimately falls on the shoulders of our recruiters and their immediate commanders. This mission has implied responsibilities: first, they must accomplish that mission while maintaining quality standards; second, they must take care of their recruiters and their families; and third, they must ensure that they represent the Corps as ambassadors to the Nation's citizens. The Marine Corps is constantly trying to improve our recruiter selection teams in order to select the best that the Corps has to offer for this demanding duty. This emphasis on selecting high-quality Marines to be recruiters is directly responsible for our continued success. We have also enhanced our awards system so we can better recognize our recruiters for their superlative efforts.

In another new effort to help ease the difficulties of recruiting duty, the Marine Corps' Career Retention Specialists are diligently working to show the benefits of continued services to those Marines considering separation, ultimately reducing the burden on the canvassing recruiter. Additionally these Career Retention Specialists are actively seeking those Marines that demonstrate the skill and desire to become recruiters

and identifying them to our screening teams. As a part of this new incentive, we are allowing each Marine who volunteers for recruiting to select his or her recruiting district for assignment.

Through the above mentioned and other initiatives, we have begun to see an increase in the number of volunteers for enlisted recruiting duty from roughly 20% to about 35% in the past eight months. This progress is also exemplified in the fact that 100% of all our Officer Selection Officers are volunteers. Recruiting duty in the Marine Corps is becoming increasingly sought after by all ranks.

Improve Safety and Quality of Life

Marine Corps Recruiting is committed to improving the health and safety of all Marines, Sailors, Civilian-Marines, and members of the officer and enlisted entry pools. Safety is inextricably linked in our operational commitments. Through continued support of initiatives that convince individuals of the importance of reducing vehicle speed, using safety belts, and appropriate personal risk management techniques, we will reap the benefits of a revitalized safety campaign plan. Our goal in this is to achieve the mission with reduced risk, injury, and damage to personnel and equipment.

Along with improving overall safety, we are also employing various measures to gauge the effectiveness of our quality of life programs that support our family members. Recruiting is a lifestyle that is especially demanding on families, in which many are isolated on independent duty from the kinds of support structures common on posts and stations throughout the Marine Corps. Accordingly, we realize that in many cases, the strongest support a recruiter can have comes from his or her own family. "Welcome Aboard" programs that help prepare Marines and their families for recruiting duty and the

surrounding community, TRICARE Prime Remote to address health care needs, obtaining affordable housing, and a dynamic and viable Key Volunteer Network with top down leadership participation, contribute to the quality of life issues most important to Marines and their families.

The Marine Corps Recruiting Command recently instituted a survey to measure the effectiveness of quality of life support to Marines and family members at the lowest level, which is the recruiter on the street. We are trying harder to “walk the talk” and affect better Quality of Life programs that are responsive and action oriented. The uniqueness of serving in this assignment demands that we pay attention to these Quality of Life areas as they have great impact on a recruiters’ continued quest to attain and exploit success.

RETENTION OVERVIEW

A successful recruiting effort is merely the first step in the process of placing a properly trained Marine in the right place at the right time. The dynamics of our manpower system then must match occupational specialties and grades to our Commanders’ needs throughout the operating forces. The Marine Corps endeavors to manage stable, predictable retention patterns. However, as is the case with recruiting, civilian opportunities abound for our Marines as private employers actively solicit our young Marines for lucrative private sector employment. Compensation is one of the main reasons Marines decide not to reenlist. The Marine Corps appreciates the efforts the members of the committee have made to help raise the compensation level of our Marines. We need to keep pay competitive with the civilian sector. Reduction of the Out

of Pocket (OoP) expenses should continue at a pace to achieve the goal of reducing the average OoP expense to zero by 2005.

Enlisted

We are very mindful of enlisted retention issues. Our enlisted force is the backbone of the Corps and we make every effort to retain our best people. Even though we are experiencing minor turbulence in some specialties, the aggregate enlisted retention situation is encouraging. Some shortages exist in a number of high tech Military Occupational Specialties (MOSs) that represent an important part of our war fighting capability, and these young Marines remain in high demand in the civilian sector.

We are a young force, making accessions a chief concern for manpower readiness. Of the 154,000 active duty enlisted force, over 28,000 are still teenagers - 108,000 are still on their first enlistment. In FY02, we will have reenlisted approximately 27% of our first term eligible population. These 5,908 Marines represent 100% of the Marines we need to transition into the career force. This will be the ninth consecutive year we will have achieved this same objective. Prior to FY02, we had experienced a slight increase in the number of Marines we needed to reenlist. To counter this rising requirement, we are now focusing greater attention on retaining Marines in their 6th through 12th years of Service. The Subsequent Term Alignment Plan (STAP) was introduced, in FY02, to focus on retaining experience. Due to a strong draw from the civilian sector, we must elevate the importance of retaining our career force by paying additional attention as well as allocating resources to keep the experience level of our force on par with previous years.

This year we continue to see smaller first term non-Expiration of Active Service (EAS) attrition rates similar to the lower attrition we experienced in fiscal years 2000 and 2001. The implementation of the Crucible and the Unit Cohesion programs continue to contribute to improved retention among our young Marines. The impact of lower non-EAS attrition allowed us to reduce our accession mission in FY01 and FY02. This “Good News” may allow us to continue this trend in FY03. The “Bad News” is it has increased the cost of our Manpower account by extending the average length of service of individual Marines. This is the type of “Bad News” we don’t mind having, as these positive results have reduced the burden placed on our recruiters, as well as provided our operating forces with more experience.

In the larger context, we are extremely pleased with our recruiting and retention situation. We anticipate meeting our aggregate personnel objectives and we continue to successfully maintain the appropriate balance of first term and career Marines. The management of youth and experience in our enlisted ranks is critical to our success and we are extremely proud of our accomplishments.

We attack our specialty shortages with the highly successful Selective Reenlistment Bonus (SRB) program. These shortages persist in some highly technical specialties such as intelligence, data communications experts, and air command and control technicians. Currently, the Marine Corps has allotted \$48.4M in new SRB payments to assist our reenlistment efforts in FY02. These payments will be split 60/40 between the First Term Alignment Plan and STAP, respectively. The SRB program has significantly aided our reenlistment rates and improved retention for some of our critical skill shortages. In FY03, we anticipate allotting \$51.7M in new payments. In FY02, we

continued lump sum payments increasing the net present value of the incentive and positively influencing highly qualified personnel who are currently undecided. This is an incredibly powerful incentive for the undecided to witness another Marine's reenlistment and award of SRB in the total amount. And, with the Thrift Saving Program having begun this year, our Marines can now confidently invest these funds towards his/her future financial security.

Officers

Overall, officer retention continues to experience success with substantive improvements in retention, beginning in FY00. Our FY02 results continue to reflect an overall officer attrition rate that is lower than historical rates. We believe that the reduction of voluntary separations may be attributed to the Congressionally approved compensation triad and the strategic, albeit limited, use of specialty pays. As with the enlisted force, we still have some skill imbalances within our officer corps, especially in the aviation specialties, intelligence, and command/control.

Although we are cautiously optimistic, pilot retention remains a concern. Fixed wing pilot "take rates" for the FY02 Aviation Continuation Pay (ACP) Plan have not met retention targets because of an inadequate eligible population that resulted from large previous years' losses. The aggregate FY02 retention target for aviators is anticipated to be met based on "take rates" from the rotary wing and naval flight officer communities. Retaining Marine Corps aviators involves a concerted Marine Corps effort in multiple areas that have been identified as impacting an officer's decision to remain in the Marine Corps. Many recent FY00 and FY01 retention initiatives have made substantial corrective strides, strengthening the Marine Corps' position towards retaining aviation officers (i.e., Marine Aviation Campaign Plan, and pay reform). Supplementary pay

programs such as ACP can provide an additional incentive by lessening the significant difference between civilian airline and military compensation. We will continue to focus on retaining our mid-grade aviators (junior majors and lieutenant colonels) and will continue to reevaluate our aviation retention situation to optimize these resources.

The Marine Corps officer and enlisted retention situation is very encouraging. Through the sensational efforts of our unit commanders, we will achieve every strength objective for FY02 and expect to start FY03 solidly poised for continued success. Even though managing our retention success has offered new challenges such as maintaining the appropriate grade mix, sustaining quality accessions, and balancing occupational specialties, we will continue to press forward and meet all challenges head on. In this difficult recruiting/retention environment, the so-called "War for Talent," the Marine Corps remains optimistic about our current situation and expect these positive trends to continue.

CIVILIAN-MARINES

Civilian-Marines are an integral part of the Corps' Total Force concept. We have approximately 13,000 civilian-Marines, which is approximately 2% of the total DoD civilian workforce. The Marine Corps has one civilian-Marine per 12 active duty Marines. Our civilian-Marines fill key billets aboard Marine Corps bases and stations thus freeing our Marines from the supporting establishment to return to the operating forces. Like other DoD agencies, our civilian workforce is aging and within the next five years, 30% of our workforce will be optional retirement eligible. Although historical data indicates only 25% of those eligible in any given year actually retire, our growing eligible population will still produce significant losses. In FY02, we have embarked on a

new program centered on the career and leadership development of our civilian-Marines. Our goal is to make the Marine Corps the employer of choice within the DoD.

END STRENGTH

For the past decade, the Marine Corps has continued to aggressively examine its existing force structure. This is to ensure proper staffing of our operating forces at the level required for the tempo and variety of our full spectrum capabilities, and the efficient and effective use of Marines and civilian-Marines. Through various efforts, we have made substantial progress to increase the manning in our operating forces by shifting approximately 2,500 Marines from the supporting establishment. However, the new security environment has increased our operating forces needs. The Marine Corps has responded by reactivating the 4th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (Anti-Terrorism) (4th MEB (AT)) that requires an increase of 2,400 Marines to our end strength. Our FY03 end strength goal is a total of 175,000 active duty Marines. The 4th MEB was activated utilizing existing active duty forces and has already been deployed to Capital Hill (anthrax), Incirlik (Force Protection), and Kabul (reactivation of the U.S. Embassy). The 4th MEB (AT) provides the Unified Commanders a new capability for joint force operations. The increased Marines and funding for the 4th MEB (AT) has been included in the FY03 President's Budget, and we respectfully request that you support this important initiative.

TOTAL FORCE INTEGRATION

The events of September 11, 2001 forced the Services to shift their priorities to meet new challenges. The Marine Corps "Total Force Team" was ready to meet these new challenges. Our active forces reacted initially, while we selectively integrated our

Reserve forces to meet mission requirements. We have mobilized Individual Mobilization Augmentees (IMA) and Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) Marines to meet staff augmentation requirements in the communications, intelligence, force protection, and headquarters planning areas. Selected Marine Corps Reserve (SMCR) units have been activated to provide Homeland Security and Quick Reaction Force missions in Federal Emergency Management Agency regions 3 and 9. To date, we have filled our requirements with “volunteers.” In respect to Stop Loss, the Marine Corps has made judicious use of the authority and to date have only held 106 Marines beyond their EAS. Under current conditions the maximum number of Marines that may be affected by Stop Loss is 395.

MANAGING TIME AWAY FROM HOME

(PERSONNEL TEMPO – PERSTEMPO)

The Marine Corps is in compliance with PERSTEMPO legislation, and we are meeting the OSD tracking and reporting criteria. We remain committed to maintaining the proper balance between operational deployments and the quality of life of our Marines and their families. But, Marines join the Corps to train and deploy, and we do not disappoint them. Service in the Marine Corps requires deployments for readiness and mission accomplishment. As written, PERSTEMPO legislation is inconsistent with the Corps’ expeditionary, forward deployed nature and could have adverse effects on our unit cohesion, stability, training, and readiness. Therefore, in concert with the Navy, we have recommended modifications to PERSTEMPO legislation be included in the Secretary of Defense’s March 2002 PERSTEMPO report to Congress.

Summary

We remain optimistic about our current status in this challenging recruiting and retention environment. Due to the hard work of our recruiters and Marine leaders all across the Corps, we will once again exceed our recruiting and retention goals.

The Marine Corps continues to be a significant force provider and a major participant in joint/combined operations. For 6 percent of the DoD budget, the Marine Corps provides 20 percent of the active ground maneuver battalions, 20 percent of the active fighter/attack squadrons, 19 percent of the attack helicopter squadrons, and nearly one-third of the active duty combat service support. Your Marine Corps remains strong and able to accomplish its mission, yet only a sustained increase in resources will yield the flexibility and resilience we need in both the short and long term. Our successes have been achieved by following the same core values today that gave us victory on yesterday's battlefields.

With your support, we can continue to achieve our goals and provide our Marines with what they need to accomplish their tasks. Marines are proud of what they are doing. They are proud of our Eagle, Globe and Anchor and what it represents to this country. It is our job to provide for them the leadership, resources, Quality of Life, and moral guidance to carry our proud Corps forward. With your support, a vibrant Marine Corps will continue to meet our nation's call as we have for the past 226 years!

