

Not public until released by the
Senate Armed Services Committee

STATEMENT OF
LIEUTENANT GENERAL FRANK A. PANTER
DEPUTY COMMANDANT, INSTALLATIONS AND LOGISTICS
BEFORE THE
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
READINESS SUBCOMMITTEE
ON
READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT
MAY 18, 2011

Not public until released by the
Senate Armed Services Committee

Chairman McCaskill, Ranking Member Ayotte, members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide you a report on how the Marine Corps is sustaining the force. Despite high operational tempo, your Marines are resilient, motivated and performing superbly in combat, maritime security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions around the globe.¹

Today, partnered with the U.S. Navy, we have roughly 32,000 Marines forward deployed and forward engaged around the world. This past year alone, our afloat forces conducted humanitarian assistance missions in Pakistan, Haiti, and the Philippines; recaptured the pirated ship *Magellan Star*, rescuing its crew from Somali pirates; and partnered with allied forces in engagement missions in the Pacific Rim, Latin America, Africa and Eastern Europe. Even as we speak today, your U.S. Marine Corps is supporting disaster relief operations in Japan as the result of the recent devastating earthquake and tsunami while concurrently supporting operations ODYSSEY DAWN and ENDURING FREEDOM.

The Marine Corps is keenly aware of the fiscal realities confronting our Nation. During these times of constrained resources, the Marine Corps remains committed to being the best stewards of scarce public funds. We maintain a longstanding tradition in Congress as DOD's "Penny Pinchers." Our institutionalized culture of frugality positions us as the "best value" for the defense dollar. For approximately 8.5% of the annual Defense budget, the Marine Corps provides the Nation 31% of its ground operating forces, 12% of its fixed wing tactical aircraft, and 19% of its attack helicopters.

The Marine Corps' continued success as "America's Expeditionary Force-in-Readiness" is completely dependent on continued Congressional investment in our Marines, their families, the reset and modernization of our equipment, and the training of the Marine Air Ground Task

¹ CMC Posture Statement, pp 1-2

Forces (MAGTF) for future security environments. On behalf of all Marines, their families, and our civilian Marines, thank you for your unwavering support.

Role of the Marine Corps. As our Commandant recently testified, the role of the United States Marine Corps affords three strategic advantages for our Nation:

- We are a versatile “middleweight” force capable of response across the range of military operations;
- We have inherent speed and agility that buys time for our Nation's leaders; and
- We possess an enabling and partnering capability in joint and combined operations.

To enable these strategic advantages, the Commandant identified four enduring priorities aligned with the 2010 National Security Strategy:

- 1) Continue to provide the best trained and equipped Marine units to Afghanistan;
- 2) Rebalance our Corps, posture it for the future, and aggressively experiment with and implement new capabilities and organizations;
- 3) Better educate and train our Marines to succeed in distributed operations and increasingly complex environments; and
- 4) Keep faith with our Marines, Sailors and our families.²

Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. We have made tremendous progress in Afghanistan and this clearly remains our number one priority. At present, there are more than 20,000 Marines deployed in Afghanistan. The gains that we have achieved in Helmand Province are the result of the outstanding leadership, professionalism, and bravery of our young Marines and their leaders

² CMC Posture Statement, pp. 2-4

on the ground. We will continue to provide forces to Afghanistan capable of full spectrum combat and counterinsurgency operations, while balancing our capabilities to meet the other tasks the Nation will ask of us in the future. We have provided, and will continue to provide, the best possible training and equipment for our Marines to further capitalize on the current successes in Afghanistan.

Marine units operating in Afghanistan have the highest state of readiness for equipment, personnel and training. Through Congressional support, we continue to receive funds for the rapid fielding of urgently needed items to support the Afghanistan effort. The Mine Resistant Armor Protected vehicles and the Mine Resistant Armor Protected All Terrain Vehicles provide superb force protection as our Marines continue to reclaim ground previously controlled by the Taliban. In December 2010, we deployed a reinforced Tank Company to complement our efforts in Regional Command SouthWest to further exploit our hard-earned achievements in this highly contested region.

Ground Equipment Readiness. As the Commandant testified in his statement before Congress in March, our equipment abroad and at home stations has been heavily taxed in nearly a decade of constant combat operations³. We continue to globally source equipment for Afghanistan, and to meet other equipment requirements as we rapidly respond to emerging threats in the Middle East and elsewhere around the globe. The requirement to fully resource deployed forces, often in excess of our tables of equipment, has resulted in redistribution of assets from non-deployed forces and strategic programs to meet these requirements. The result is a reduced availability of equipment essential to outfit and train our non-deployed units. The supply rating of units at home station that are not in pre-deployment training hovers around 65 percent. When we surged forces

³ CMC Posture Statement, p. 4

into Afghanistan, we sent almost half of the required equipment directly from Iraq to Afghanistan without full reset actions. Success in Afghanistan has stressed our equipment readiness posture due to the following factors:

- The harsh environment and tempo of operations in theater through nearly a decade of combat have accelerated wear and tear.
- The enemy's weapon of choice in Afghanistan (as it was in Iraq)--the improvised explosive device--has greatly accelerated wear and tear on our vehicles due to the increased weight of vehicle armor.
- The greatly distributed nature of current operations has shown us that our legacy tables of equipment were inadequate. As a result, the type and number of ground vehicles, radios, and other major end items has significantly increased. For example, in our infantry battalions, the number of tactical vehicles has almost doubled while the number of radio sets has grown sevenfold.

Reset. The decision to rapidly build combat power in Afghanistan forced us to delay our original plans to reset the Corps. We estimate that our reset requirements have increased as a direct result of the shift of equipment from Iraq to support the surge of forces in Afghanistan. While we have adjusted our original reset plan, we continually seek to synchronize Marine Corps reset efforts to ensure we effectively and efficiently reset equipment to support follow-on combat operations. Major elements of our ongoing reset plan are:

- Better integrating our Ground Combat Tactical Vehicle Strategy as part of an overall Ground Equipping Strategy. These efforts are informing the Reset and Reconstitution resource allocation decisions for the Marine Corps.

- Maximizing sources of repair in the Central Command Area of Responsibility to sustain our equipment in theater by tapping into joint capabilities such as the great support provided by the U.S. Army Material Command and the Defense Logistics Agency.
- Aggressively repairing equipment at our depots and distributing to fill shortfalls for established priorities.
- Disposing of equipment deemed beyond economical repair or no longer needed in our inventory.

The Commandant stated that the price tag for reset is \$10.6 billion, of which \$3.1 billion has been requested in FY11, and \$2.5 billion in FY12. The remaining \$5 billion will be needed upon the completion of our mission in Afghanistan.⁴ This funding will provide depot level maintenance of equipment; procurement of combat vehicles, major weapons systems, and engineering equipment; replacement of ammunition; and related expenditures.

Reconstitution of Equipment. As we implement the changes identified in lessons learned from nearly ten years of combat and from our force structure review, we will continue to assess modernization requirements for equipment to meet our post-Afghanistan posture. Our initial estimate of costs to modernize equipment sets to support future operations is \$5 billion, which is completely separate from our reset costs. We have begun to address our reconstitution shortfall, requesting \$253 million in FY12 for new equipment procurement.⁵

Prepositioning Programs. The current MPF program is composed of a fleet of 16 ships divided into three Maritime Pre-Positioning Squadrons (MPSRON) located in the Mediterranean Sea,

⁴ CMC Posture Statement, p. 12

⁵ CMC Posture Statement, p. 12

Indian Ocean (Diego Garcia), and Pacific Ocean (Guam and Tinian). When completely loaded, Marine Corps prepositioning vessels today carry more than 26,000 pieces of major equipment including tanks, wheeled tactical vehicles, and howitzers, as well as the necessary supplies to support our expeditionary force.

We continue to rotate the MPSRONS through our scheduled maintenance cycles at our Blount Island complex in Florida. Our MSPRONs reset efforts will ensure the ships are loaded with the most capable and modern equipment available in order to support the full range military operations. While there are some critical shortages, the readiness trend lines remain high and our Maritime Preposition Force remains a viable option for the nation when needed to support contingencies plans throughout the globe.

The Department of the Navy is currently funding the full Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF) program of 16 ships through FY12. However, the Department of the Navy POM-13 efficiency approved by the Secretary of Defense places six ships in Reduced Operating Status (ROS) beginning in FY13. This equates to savings of approximately \$500M across the Future Year's Defense Plan (FYDP) but implementation of this new strategy needs additional analysis.

. The Marine Corps will continue to optimize its MPF program to remain a responsive and relevant warfighting capability to Geographic Combatant Commander requirements.

With the deferring of MPF-Future (MPF-F), the Marine Corps and Navy have focused on an interim solution to enhance current MPF with three new programs of ships to enable future seabasing concepts. The addition of three Mobile Landing Platforms (MLP) and three Auxiliary Dry Cargo/Ammunition ships (T-AKES) to the Maritime Prepositioning Squadrons (MPSRONS), coupled with existing Large, Medium-Speed, Roll-On, Roll-Off (LMSR) cargo ships, will enable the MPSRONS to conduct at-sea, sea-state three, selective offload of vehicles, personnel, and

equipment without complete reliance on fixed ports. The introduction of Mobile Landing Platforms (MLPs), Auxiliary Dry Cargo/Ammunition ships (T-AKES), and Low Medium Speed Roll-On/Roll-Off ships (LMSRs) provide the Navy and Marine Corps team a substantial step in enhancing our current sea-basing capabilities. It is important to note that these programs are not just strategic war reserve. Marine Corps prepositioning programs support forward-deployed training exercises, theater engagement and, with the amphibious ships of the U.S. Navy, the steady state requirements of the combatant commanders.

Energy Initiatives. For installations, we have a diverse and balanced portfolio including photovoltaic, wind and landfill gas generated renewable power. In 2012, the Marine Corps plans to invest over \$200M in installations energy. Over 90% of that will be invested on efficiency projects to decentralize heating plants, upgrade HVAC systems, retrofit lighting fixtures/controls, and improve building R-values (insulating properties) to reduce energy consumption.

Up to 10% of the investment will support additional renewable energy sources. Our overall energy investments over the next three years will enable the Marine Corps to meet the requirement to reduce Energy Intensity by 30% by 2015. To date, we have cut Energy Intensity by 10%. All facilities being constructed by the Marine Corps adhere to the most stringent energy standards in the construction industry and are certified to a minimum standard of LEED Silver. Many of our recent projects have been certified to LEED Gold and Platinum.

While our primary objectives for installation energy initiatives are environmentally and fiscally focused, for our deployed units, the safety and well-being of our Marines and Sailors in combat are our critical goals. We consider reducing energy consumption on the battlefield as a

force protection issue in that it reduces the logistics burden to sustain forces in the field. Additionally, energy efficiency makes us more expeditionary by extending operational range and reducing reliance on logistical support.

The Marine Corps is experiencing success in a number of expeditionary energy initiatives. Our current initiatives in Afghanistan center in Helmand Province and include solar battery chargers for portable radios, photovoltaic arrays (towed and land arrayed) for static combat outposts, and solar thermal powered tent lighting. We have purchased 200 shelter liners for our standard Base-X dome tents. These liners will raise the R-value of our tents from R-1 to approx R-3. These improvements should pay for themselves in fuel saved in less than one year on the battlefield.

Future Readiness. In fulfilling the Commandant's priorities, we are seeking to rebalance the Corps, posture for the future, and aggressively experiment with and implement new capabilities and organizations. The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review and the 2010 National Security Strategy identify the necessity of overcoming irregular threats and enabling forces that are globally available, yet regionally focused. Today, Geographic Combatant Commanders continue to register a need for forward deployed amphibious forces capable of operating across the spectrum of military engagements, from countering irregular threats to conducting security cooperation, from engaging in regional deterrence to providing crisis response.

In recognition of this shifting landscape, last fall the United States Marine Corps conducted a rigorous force structure review. The outcome of this review is a post-Afghanistan Marine Corps comprised of an optimum mix of capabilities to fulfill our role as America's Expeditionary Force in Readiness. This review addressed Marine Corps capabilities, cost, and

readiness relative to operational requirements of the Combatant Commanders. The result is a strategically mobile, middleweight force, ideally suited for forward presence and crisis response. We will be light enough to leverage the capacity and flexibility of our amphibious ships, but heavy enough to carry the day when we get there. This optimum mix of people and equipment entails reorganization of our force and a modest reduction in personnel. As we make these adjustments, we will keep faith with our Marines, Sailors and their families to ensure that personnel are successful in their transition back to civilian status. Achieving this future posture will of course require continued dialogue with and the support of Congress.

Summary. Your Navy and Marine Corps team offers an impressive forward deployed and forward engaged capability in the defense of our Nation. It provides an immediate response to contingencies and supports the Combatant Commanders in setting conditions for follow-on forces as required.

On behalf of your brave and dedicated Marines, I offer again our sincere appreciation for your past and continued support. The U.S. Marine Corps stands ready to fulfill our role as “America’s Expeditionary Force-in-Readiness,” and with your support, we will respond rapidly and capably when called upon for future contingencies.