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Senate Armed Services Committee

STATEMENT OF
GENERAL JOSEPH F. DUNFORD
ASSISTANT COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS
BEFORE THE
READINESS SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
ON
READINESS
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General Joseph F. Dunford, Jr.
Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps



General Dunford was promoted to General and assumed the duties of Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps on 23 October 2010. A native of Boston, Massachusetts, General Dunford graduated from St. Michael's College and was commissioned in 1977.

General Dunford's assignments in the operating forces include Platoon and Company Commander, Co K, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines; Company Commander, Co A, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines; and Company Commander, Co L, 3rd Battalion, 6th Marines. He served as the Operations, Plans, and Training Officer in 2d ANGLICO and the Regimental Executive Officer, 6th Marines. He commanded the 2nd Battalion, 6th Marines and the 5th Marine Regiment. He served as the Chief of Staff, 1st Marine Division.

Other assignments include Aide to the Commanding General, III MEF and a tour in the Officer Assignment Branch, HQMC. He has also served as the Marine Officer Instructor, College of the Holy Cross; as a member of the Commandant's Staff Group; and as the Senior Aide to the Commandant of the Marine Corps. Joint assignments include service as the Executive Assistant to the Vice Chairman, JCS; Chief, Global and Multilateral Affairs Division (J5); and Vice Director for Operations (J3).

As a general officer, he has served as the Assistant Division Commander, 1st Marine Division; the Director, Operations Division, Plans, Policies and Operations, HQMC; and the Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies and Operations; and most recently as Commanding General, I MEF and Commander, Marine Forces Central Command.

General Dunford is a graduate of the U. S. Army Ranger School, Marine Corps Amphibious Warfare School, and the U. S. Army War College. He holds an M.A. in Government from Georgetown University and an M.A. in International Relations from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

Today's Marines are thoroughly trained, combat proven and are meeting all Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) and combatant commander requirements. The approximately 18,000 Marines deployed in Helmand Province under Regional Command South-West remain our top priority. Rotation after rotation, their professionalism and morale remain high. In the last several years they have successfully created the conditions for the Afghan National Security Forces to grow and mature, and they have given the Afghan people an opportunity for a better future. Outside of Afghanistan, Marines have been ready and able to respond to a range of incidents from natural disasters to civil uprisings, and they stand ready and able to respond to future incidents that threaten our Nation's interests regardless of the location or the nature of the occurrence.

Current Readiness

Readiness comes at a cost and the high readiness of the deployed forces comes at the expense of our non-deployed units' readiness. The Marine Corps can sustain its current operational requirements on an enduring basis; however, to maintain the high readiness of our forward deployed units, we have globally sourced equipment and personnel for Afghanistan and other emerging threats from our non-deployed units. The non-deployed forces' principal readiness detractor is the reduced availability of equipment at home stations with which to outfit and train units. The manning of our home station units also suffers due to the need to properly resource deploying units and meet the personnel requirements for Individual Augments and Security Force Assistance Teams. The primary concern with the out-of-balance readiness of our operating forces is the increased risk in the timely response to unexpected crises or large-scale contingencies, since the non-deployed forces likely would be the responders.

Resetting the Force

Reset is a subset of reconstitution and comprises the actions taken to restore units to a desired level of combat capability commensurate with the units' future missions. After more than a decade of combat, this will require an unprecedented level of effort. The Marine Corps is resetting its forces "in stride" while fighting the war in Afghanistan and transitioning to the new Defense Strategic Guidance. Unlike previous post-conflict periods, such as after Operation DESERT STORM, we do not anticipate taking an "operational pause" to reset as we transition from OEF.

The Marine Corps' *Operation Enduring Freedom Ground Equipment Reset Strategy*, released in January 2012, will serve to identify the equipment we will reset or divest. We currently estimate, subject to change, that the ground equipment reset liability is in excess of \$3 billion.¹ This forecast is primarily based on the replacement of combat losses, the restoration of

¹ This \$3B liability is our "strategic" reset liability; or simply, the cost to reset our Afghanistan equipment set to a zero-hours/zero-miles condition. In addition to strategic reset we have a \$1.3B OCO is requested in FY 13, primarily to cover cost of war issues, but some of which is slated for strategic maintenance for reset. How much of the \$1.3B will be used for reset is dependent upon both the quantity of equipment that flows out of Afghanistan and our depot capacity.

items to serviceable condition, and the extension in service life of selected items. The Strategy prioritizes investment and modernization decisions to develop our middleweight force, per the Defense Strategic Guidance.

Our reset effort is underway and it maximizes the Marine Corps' depot capacity, where we expect the bulk of reset execution to occur. Notably, the reset of our equipment is expected to extend two to three years beyond the end of our involvement in OEF due to the time it will take to bring all of our equipment back to CONUS and move it through our depot system.. The continued availability of our ground equipment depot capacity at both Barstow, California and Albany, Georgia is essential for reset, for our ability to both self-generate readiness and surge in response to demand. Continued Congressional support over the next several years will be critical to the Marine Corps' equipment reset efforts.

Reconstitution

The Marine Corps has a strategic trajectory to reconstitute to a ready force by FY 17.² Our reconstitution efforts will restore and upgrade our combat capability and will ensure our units are ready for operations across the range of military operations. To ensure we are organizing for the emerging security environment and its inherent and implied challenges, the Commandant directed a Total Force Structure Review in 2010. This Review aligned our force to meet the needs of the nation and took into consideration the realities of constrained spending levels; the strategic defense guidance; and the lessons learned from 10 years of war, particularly the requirements to conduct distributed operations. Additionally, reconstitution will rebalance and sustain home station readiness so that our units are ready to deploy on short notice.

To meet the Defense Strategic Guidance within the fiscal realities, we will decrease our active duty end strength from 202,100, beginning this fiscal year, to 182,100 by the end of FY 16.³ We will retain our reserve component at 39,600 Marines. The active duty end strength reductions will occur at the rate of approximately 5,000 per year. We have no plan to conduct a reduction-in-force. These end strengths will retain our capacity and capability to support steady state and crisis response operations; while the pace of the reductions will account for the completion of our mission in Afghanistan and provide the resiliency that comes with sufficient dwell times. Reshaping the active duty component to 182,100 Marines will entail some risk relative to present and future capacity requirements; but it's manageable, particularly as we maintain the reserve component's operational capability.

We are also examining future requirements with an on-going comprehensive review of the Marine Corps' equipment inventories to validate reset strategies, future acquisition plans, depot maintenance programming, and modernization initiatives. This review will incorporate the

² Reconstitution consists of the actions beyond reset, taken during or after operational employment to restore and/or upgrade combat capability to full-spectrum operational readiness. Reconstitution includes personnel, equipment, and training. Force reconstitution spans activities from normal sustainment (rearm, refuel, recover (dwell), repair, and replace), through reorganization and regeneration of units to redeployment.

³ Our programmed FY 13 active duty end strength is 197,300 Marines.

lessons we learned from more than a decade of combat and will enable us to upgrade our tables of equipment to reflect the way we expect to conduct operations in the future.

Five Readiness Pillars

To achieve institutional readiness, sustain operational requirements, and be prepared for crisis and contingency response, we must restore and maintain a balance across five pillars:

- High quality people
- Unit readiness
- Capacity to meet combatant commander requirements
- Infrastructure sustainment
- Equipment modernization

High Quality People

The recruiting and retention of high quality people are essential to attain a highly ready and professional force. We need the right quantities and occupational specialties to fulfill our role as an expeditionary force in readiness. In FY 11, the Corps achieved 100 percent of its officer and recruiting goals for the active and reserve components, while exceeding DoD quality standards for Tier 1 High School Graduates and Mental Categories I-IIIa. We expect to achieve the same in FY 12. The Marine Corps also achieved its retention mission in FY 11 and anticipates doing so again in FY 12. We rely on Congress' continued support with tools such as adequate compensation, incentive pays, and selective reenlistment bonuses to meet future recruiting challenges, position the force for the impending drawdown, and shape the all volunteer force to meet the new defense strategy.

Civilian Marines are an integral part of our total force, supporting the Corps' mission and daily functions; they constitute less than five percent of our FY 12 budget. Already we have begun to shape this force by reducing it from 21,000 direct funded full time equivalents to 17,501, without drastic downsizing impacts. We will hold the civilian workforce at FY 10 end-of-year levels, with some exceptions for critical growth areas such as cyber, information technology, and security. Marine civilians are a "best value" for the defense dollar, are shaped to support the Corps into the future, and are the leanest civilian work force within DoD, with only one civilian for every 10 Marines.

Unit Readiness

This pillar upholds maintaining and shaping the readiness of the operating forces, to include the necessary operations and maintenance (O&M) funding to train to core missions and maintain equipment. The Marine Corps has, and always will, source our best trained, most ready forces to meet combatant commander requirements. The challenge is to maintain the readiness of the non-deployed forces so they can respond to crises and contingencies with the proper balance of equipping, manning, and training.

As our forces return from Afghanistan, our focus will be on training to our core expeditionary and amphibious mission capabilities. We anticipate incremental increases in the

core training readiness of units as Marines and equipment flow back from Afghanistan over the next 24-36 months.

After the drawdown from Afghanistan, we expect to be increasingly engaged around the world – training, engaging, deterring, and responding to all manner of crises and contingencies. O&M funding is essential for our readiness to conduct steady state operations, including amphibious and Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadron (MPSRON) operations, provide support to the combatant commanders, and provide for our supporting establishment's sustainment for the operating forces. As operations in Afghanistan wind down, we anticipate OCO funding will correspondingly ramp down. However, we know that future requirements to maintain readiness will increase demand on O&M funding. The irregular battlefields of today and tomorrow necessitate more distributed operations and decentralized command – both of which will drive training costs higher.

Sufficient O&M funding will be essential in the Pacific as we resume our unit deployment program in Japan; provide rotational forces in Australia and Guam; and engage throughout the region. It will also be needed to cover the transportation costs for bringing together the widely dispersed Marine Expeditionary Brigade and Marine Expeditionary Force elements for training and exercises.

Capacity to Meet Combatant Commander Requirements

Force-sizing to meet Geographic Combatant Commander requirements, with the right mix of capacity and capability, is the essence of our third readiness pillar. Decisions made in our Force Structure Review will provide a better depth of Marine forces capable of executing a single major contingency operation and optimized for current operations and crisis/contingency response. The capacities of our organic intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; command and control; and unmanned aircraft systems will be increased. Our critical capacity versus requirement concerns include: shifting forces to III MEF in the Pacific, ensuring we retain a global crisis response capability, and the availability and readiness of amphibious shipping and maritime prepositioned assets to meet training and contingency requirements. We are also reshaping organizations, capabilities, and capacities to increase aggregate utility and flexibility across the range of military operations, to include enhanced support to U.S. Special Operations and Cyber Commands.

Infrastructure Sustainment

Infrastructure sustainment is the investment in real property, maintenance, and base infrastructure to support the mission sets of tenant commands. We must adequately resource the sustainment of our bases and stations to maintain our physical infrastructure and the complimentary ability to train and deploy highly ready forces. As we rebalance toward the Pacific, we will ensure we make the proper investments in ranges and facilities to maintain the training readiness of deployed forces. Sustainment, recapitalization, and operations funding must also be balanced to maintain quality infrastructure. We request Congress' continued

support for facilities sustainment and demolition funds, essential MILCON funding (Joint Strike Fighter, MV-22, Marine Corps Security Forces, Marine Corps University), family housing, and environmental restoration.

Equipment Modernization

In this austere fiscal environment, we are conducting only essential modernization, focusing especially on those areas that underpin our core competencies. We are mitigating costs by prioritizing and sequencing our equipment modernization and sustainment programs to maintain their readiness in a fiscally responsible manner. To maintain operational capabilities and readiness, modernization is critical in the areas of ground combat tactical vehicles; aviation; amphibious and pre-positioning ships; expeditionary energy; and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. Our modern expeditionary force will require fixed wing aircraft capable of supporting our Marine units. The Joint Strike Fighter is the best aircraft to provide that support in the future security environment. Likewise, a core capability of our expeditionary forces is the ability to project forces ashore from amphibious platforms and to maneuver once ashore. We remain committed to developing and fielding an Amphibious Combat Vehicle that meets this critical need. We request Congress' continued support for modernization to maintain the high level of future readiness our Nation will need.

Prepared to Support the Defense Strategic Guidance

The Navy-Marine Corps team and our inherent naval forward basing, crisis response capabilities and theater engagement capacity make us ideally suited to support the new strategic defense guidance's focus on the Pacific Command region. The Marine Corps will rebalance its unit deployment program to 2001 levels during FY 13 and FY 14. We recently deployed a company of Marines from Hawaii to Australia to usher in a rotational presence that will grow to a Marine Expeditionary Unit sized Marine Air Ground Task Force, with associated units and equipment, during FY 16 to FY 17. Our rotational presence throughout Asia will serve to reassure our allies, strengthen our ties, and demonstrate our commitment to the region. The sea-basing capability provided by our MPSRONs provides the flexibility to deploy forces anywhere, without reliance on mature infrastructure to include ports and airfields. Simply, sea-basing is uniquely suited to this theater where a vast amount of the area is water and does not have readily available port infrastructure to support less expeditionary capability.

Sea-based and forward deployed naval forces provide day to day engagement, crisis response, and assured access for the joint force in a contingency. Partnered with the Navy, we will continue to pursue innovative concepts for maritime expeditionary operations with platforms such as the Joint High Speed Vessel and the Mobile Landing Platform. As new maritime prepositioning force ships are integrated into the MPSRONs, they will provide additional operational benefits to the Combatant Commanders, such as an over-the-horizon surface connector capability and better selective access to equipment and supplies.

Partnered With The Navy

A critical component in building and maintaining readiness for expeditionary, amphibious operations is the availability and readiness of amphibious ships. Amphibious ships are a foundational requirement for expeditionary force projection. The Navy has acknowledged that low amphibious ship readiness can present a significant challenge to the training readiness of our Marine units and it is addressing this maintenance readiness shortfall. The recent return of the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group, which was deployed for more than 300 days, demonstrates the imperative to maintain maintenance cycles. Continued Congressional support for the Navy's shipbuilding and surface ship to shore connector plans will prove vital to the Nation's ability to retain and maintain an adequate fleet of modern amphibious ships and project power across the globe.

Our pre-positioning programs are a unique strategic capability, giving us the ability to quickly respond to a wide scale of global crises and contingencies. These programs, particularly the MPSRON, will require continued Congressional support. In order for sea-basing to be effective, using both amphibious ships and MPSRONs, the amphibious connectors will also require modernization.

Summary

On behalf of the Marines and Sailors that provide this Nation with its versatile, middleweight force in readiness, I thank Congress for its unwavering awareness and recognition of our challenges. Your continued support is requested to provide a balance across the five readiness pillars that maintain our institutional readiness.