

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL
RELEASED BY THE HOUSE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION,
VETERANS AFFAIRS, and RELATED AGENCIES,
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

STATEMENT OF

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DEPARTMENT

BEFORE THE

**HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION,
VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES**

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

MAY 13, 2021

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Preface

Chairwoman Wasserman Schultz, Ranking Member Carter, and distinguished Members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss the Marine Corps' installations which are critical to our ability to train forces and maintain readiness. Thanks to the strong support we have received from Congress, the Marine Corps continues to improve the quality and resiliency of our installations infrastructure.

First, I'd like to express my sincere gratitude for the swift response and support that was provided to rebuild the infrastructure that was damaged when Hurricane Florence made landfall in North Carolina in the fall of 2018. The effects of that storm highlighted the need to modernize and make our infrastructure more resilient so it can withstand the effects of extreme weather, with minimal interruption to training and operations. We appreciate your rapid support in providing the resources to restore II Marine Expeditionary Force's ability to train and generate combat readiness.

The Marine Corps operates installations and support infrastructure worldwide valued at more than \$110 billion that are used to train, house, and provide quality of life support for our Marines, Sailors, and their families. This infrastructure must be properly maintained to prevent degradation of our capability to train and generate readiness for global employment to support our mission-essential tasks. Protecting our installations, supporting new warfighting and training capabilities, and sustaining infrastructure are top priorities for the Marine Corps.

Installations Resiliency and Resiliency Initiatives

We define installation resilience as the ability of our installations around the world to achieve mission accomplishment in the face of threats, both kinetic and non-kinetic, that may deny, disrupt, exploit, or destroy critical infrastructure elements which would inhibit our ability to generate combat readiness. Our installations must be resilient to a wide variety of threats – from asymmetric attacks, to the effects of climate change and extreme weather. Additionally, installation resiliency must be continually assessed in response to the rapid technological change that defines this increasingly complex security environment. We must also maintain the flexibility to adapt and evolve our infrastructure protection measures to be resilient not only to today's threats, but also to provide protection against the threats of the future. Effective

operations and maintenance of installations as well as thoughtful future development and employment requires long-term planning, careful investment, and timely program execution.

Installation resiliency rests in the ability to maintain reliable access to critical functions, such as an effective power grid, clean water distribution, and communications capabilities. The Marine Corps has undertaken several initiatives to retain this access. For example, Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany is the first United States Marine Corps Net Zero Installation: the base produces as much electricity from renewable “green” energy sources as it consumes from the utility providers in the surrounding community. The transition to Net Zero has improved the resiliency of the base while reducing reliance on traditional energy sources and cutting back on greenhouse gas emissions.

The Marine Corps has also installed two smart grids at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island and Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, which enable continuity of critical installation functions in the event of a power outage. MCAS Miramar was the first Marine Corps installation to conduct a Black Start exercise earlier this year, which provided critical lessons learned to understanding how to improve installation resilience in the face of power outages and other utility failures. Continuing to invest in projects such as Net Zero initiatives and smart grids will place the Marine Corps on a trajectory to meet future requirements while withstanding disruptive weather events.

Force Design and Installations

The Marine Corps is currently undergoing a significant transition in how it is organized, trained, and equipped, to meet current and evolving threats from our peer adversaries. In addition to developing new operating concepts, increasing integration with the Navy, and modernizing the equipment we employ, the Marine Corps’ installations infrastructure must also evolve. Our installations are more than a collection of buildings, ranges, and airfields. They are global warfighting platforms that support execution of our Title X responsibilities and provide a home for our Marines, Sailors, and their families.

In this effort, sound infrastructure is a critical capability. The readiness of our infrastructure cannot just be measured in terms of the physical condition of our buildings but must also consider the optimal posture of the force around the globe and our resilience against

the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events.

The Future Force will have new capabilities whose installation requirements are difficult to fully determine at present. Further, due to the rise of peer and near peer threats, several of our bases and stations must persist inside the Weapons Engagement Zone of our adversaries which presents unique challenges for installation resilience. The Marine Corps is continuing to evaluate the locations and facilities requirements of the force. As the service's experimentation effort continues, these new requirements for support and protection will come into greater focus.

PPV Housing

The quality of life of our Marines, Sailors, and their families, is integral to the effectiveness of our force, and the overall goal of the Military Family Housing Privatization program is to provide safe, quality, and affordable housing to our military families comparable to what is available on the local economy. Our Public Private Venture (PPV) partners are responsible for providing the day-to-day operations and the management of the PPV portfolio, and the Marine Corps is responsible for providing the required oversight of the homes to ensure that they are habitable, that any identified health concerns are properly addressed, and that residents are being charged fairly for services received.

The Marine Corps, along with our partners and sister services, continues to implement the requirements of the FY20 and FY21 NDAs and has successfully implemented 14 of the 18 rights of the Tenant Bill of Rights. Coordination is underway to implement the remaining four. The Marine Corps views its role in providing homes to our Marines, Sailors, and their families as a top priority and we are committed to providing the necessary tools and resources to our installation commanders and other senior installation leadership.

Budget Uncertainty and the MILCON Process

With Congress' strong support, the Marine Corps has made significant progress over the last decade in replacing aging and underperforming infrastructure, and we are extremely grateful for the rapid infusion of financial support in response to Hurricane Florence. However, the

possibility of future budget uncertainty has the potential to erode readiness and negatively impacts the service's ability to make the long-term decisions required for maintaining healthy installations. Predictable budgets over a sustained period are critical for installation readiness, and enable the Marine Corps to effectively respond to both operational and climate-related threats using a deliberate MILCON process.

Conclusion

The Marine Corps' installations must prove resilient against the myriad threats we face. We must modernize our installations to protect our forces. Our operational capabilities are adapting to meet threat changes, and we need to invest in the next generation installation infrastructure to match the Marine Corps' evolving capabilities. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today, and for your oversight, input, and support as we determine the infrastructure requirements that will best position the Marine Corps for mission accomplishment. I look forward to working with you to sustain our warfighting capability and the readiness of our power projection platforms.