

STATEMENT
OF
GENERAL GLENN WALTERS
ASSISTANT COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS
BEFORE THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
ON
MARINE CORPS READINESS
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General Glenn M. Walters
Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps

General Walters was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant on 12 May 1979, after graduating from The Citadel with a degree in Electrical Engineering. Upon completion of the Officers Basic Course in November of 1979, he was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marines at Camp Lejeune as a Platoon Commander in Weapons Company. He attended flight training in Pensacola, Florida and was designated a Naval Aviator in March of 1981.

After receiving his wings, General Walters was assigned to Marine Aircraft Group-39 for training in the AH-1T, subsequently transferring to HMA-169 as the Flight Line Officer, Flight Scheduler and Adjutant. He completed two WESTPAC cruises in 1983 and 1984 with HMM-265.

During June of 1986, General Walters was assigned to 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Marine Division at Camp Pendleton for duty as Air Officer and Operations Officer. In July of 1987 he was assigned to HMT-303 for refresher training in the AH-1J and subsequent transition to the AH-1W. In July 1987 he deployed on MAGTF 1-88 in support of Operation Earnest Will in the Arabian Gulf on the USS Okinawa. After returning to the United States he was assigned as the Assistant Operations Officer and S-4 in HMLA-169.

Departing MAG-39 in September of 1989, General Walters attended Multi-Engine Transition Training at NAS Corpus Christi, Texas. He then attended the United States Naval Test Pilot School in 1990. After graduation from Test Pilot School, General Walters was assigned to the Attack/Assault Department of the Rotary Wing Aircraft Test Directorate at Naval Air Station, Patuxent River. His duties included Flight Test lead for the AH-1W Night Targeting System, Integrated Body and Head Restraint System and AH-1W Maverick Missile feasibility testing. He was elected to the Society of Experimental Test Pilots in October of 1994.

In April of 1994, after his tour in Flight Test, General Walters was assigned duties in the Fleet Introduction Team for the AH-1W Night Targeting System at MAG-39, Camp Pendleton, CA. Upon completion of Fleet Introduction of the NTS system, General Walters assumed the duties as Operations Officer for HMLA-369, deploying to Okinawa in November of 1995. Returning from Okinawa in May of 1996, General Walters assumed the duties as XO of HMLA-369.

General Walters took command of HMT-303 on 4 June 1997, and relinquished command 21 months later on 2 March 1999, where he was subsequently assigned the duties of XO, MAG-39. During April of 1999, General Walters was transferred to the Aviation Branch, Headquarters Marine Corps, for service as the Head, APP-2 in the Aviation Plans and Programs Division. In March of 2001 was transferred to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Acquisition, Technology & Logistics, Defense System, Land Warfare, where he was an Aviation Staff Specialist.

General Walters assumed command of VMX-22 on 28 August 2003, becoming the first Commanding Officer of the Squadron. In August of 2006 General Walters was assigned as head of the Aviation Requirements Branch (APW) in the Department of Aviation at HQMC. From

January 2007 to April 2008, he served as head of the Plans, Policy and Budget Branch (APP). In March of 2008 he assumed the duties of Assistant Deputy Commandant for Aviation. After his promotion to Brigadier General in August of 2008, he was assigned to the Joint Staff as Deputy Director J-8, DDRA. General Walters came to 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing in July of 2010, and assumed command of 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) in November of 2010. He was promoted to the rank of Major General while deployed in August of 2011, and returned in March of 2012. General Walters assumed command of 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing in May of 2012 and relinquished command in May of 2013. General Walters was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General on 7 June 2013 and was assigned as the Deputy Commandant of Programs and Resources. On August 2, 2016 General Walters was promoted to his current rank and began serving as the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Introduction

Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Smith, and distinguished members of the House Armed Services Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to testify on the current state of Marine Corps readiness. The Marine Corps remains dedicated to our essential role as our Nation's expeditionary force in readiness, chartered by the 82nd Congress and reaffirmed by the 114th Congress. During 15 years of conflict in Afghanistan and Iraq, we focused investment on ensuring Marines were prepared for the fight, and they were. This was our task and our focus. Those 15 years of conflict consumed much of the useful life of many of our legacy systems while delaying replacement with new equipment. A focus on those operations, the decrease in funding levels from Fiscal Year (FY) 2012, fiscal instability and the lack of an inter-war period have left your Marine Corps insufficiently manned, trained and equipped across the depth of the force to operate in an evolving operational environment. Under the current funding levels and those we stand to face in the near future - the current Continuing Resolution and the Budget Control Act (BCA) - your Marine Corps will experience increasingly significant challenges to the institutional readiness required to deter aggression and, when necessary, fight and win our Nation's battles. Rebuilding the Marine Corps will require near term actions that can be implemented in FY17 and FY18 as well as longer term efforts in the Future Years Defense Plan (FYDP). I would like to take this opportunity to share with you the accomplishments of your Marine Corps, provide our vision for the Marine Corps of tomorrow, and to articulate the readiness challenges we face as we strive to reach that vision. With the support of the 115th Congress, we can begin the deliberate journey to overcome these difficulties and rebuild your Marine Corps for the 21st century.

Your Marine Corps Today

In 2016, your Marine Corps remained in high demand, forward deployed, and at the same operational tempo as the past 15 years. With an increasingly challenging and complex global security environment, the Joint Force continues to require and actively employs our expeditionary capabilities. During the past year, your Marines executed approximately 185 operations, 140 security cooperation events with our partners and allies and participated in 65 major exercises.

Nearly 23,000 Marines remain stationed or deployed west of the International Date Line to maintain regional stability and deterrence in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. Our Marine Expeditionary Units (MEUs) continue their support of Joint Force requirements around the globe. Our MEUs have supported counterterrorism (CT) operations in Iraq and North Africa, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) in Japan and Haiti, and remain forward deployed to respond to the next crisis. In partnership with the State Department, we employed Marine Security Guards at 176 embassies and consulates in 146 countries. Altogether, over 66% our operating forces have been deployed or stationed overseas during calendar year 2016.

Since 2013, Marines have increasingly deployed to land-based locations due to the limited inventory of operationally available amphibious ships. Joint Force requirements remain high, and the number of available amphibious ships remains below the requirement. Despite the limitations in available amphibious shipping, your Marine Corps adapted to meet these requirements through land-based Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Forces (SPMAGTFs). In 2016, we sourced SPMAGTFs to Central Command, Africa Command and Southern Command. Our Black Sea Rotational Force remains forward deployed in Europe. Although SPMAGTFs have met a limited requirement for the Joint Force, they lack the full capability, capacity and strategic and operational agility that results when Marine Air-Ground Task Forces (MAGTFs) are embarked aboard Navy amphibious ships.

What Tomorrow's Marine Corps Requires

Marine Corps institutional readiness is built upon five pillars: Unit Readiness; Capability and Capacity to Meet Joint Force Requirements; High Quality People; Installation Capability; and Equipment Modernization. First, unit readiness is always our most immediate concern. Cohesive unit teams are the instruments that accomplish national security objectives, and we must ensure our ability to successfully accomplish any mission when called. Second, when the Joint Force requires naval expeditionary capabilities, we must answer with both the capabilities and capacity necessary to meet their needs. The third, most important pillar of our readiness remains our Marines, the product of a time-tested yet evolving transformation process beginning with our Recruiting and Training Commands. The fourth, often understated, pillar of our readiness is our infrastructure. Our bases, stations, and installations, not only serve as locations where we train our Marines, but also where we sustain their equipment and support their

families. We have a backlog of \$9 billion in deferred infrastructure sustainment requirements. We require up-to-date training systems, ranges and facilities. We need resources to sustain our installation capabilities at a higher level than we have been able to reach for the last five years. Fifth and finally, we must accelerate equipment modernization, as it is essential in our transformation to a 21st century, 5th generation Marine Corps.

We require proper balance across these pillars to achieve a force capable not only of assuring allies and deterring threats, but able to rapidly respond to crises and contingencies, while remaining good stewards of the Nation's limited resources. Currently, readiness is not where it needs to be. Resources that would have otherwise been applied to installation capabilities and modernization were re-prioritized to support deployed and next-to-deploy units to safeguard near-term operational unit readiness. We are not only out of balance but are also short of the resources required to rebalance.

We require a more stable and predictable fiscal planning horizon to support increased end strength, equipment recapitalization and modernization, amphibious ship capability and capacity, and the modern infrastructure required to rebuild and sustain balanced readiness across the depth of the force. Looming BCA implementation continues to disrupt our planning and directly threatens our current and future readiness.

Unit Readiness

Despite the existing fiscal constraints, we will continue to ensure deployed units possess mission critical resources to the greatest extent possible – trained personnel, operational equipment and vital spare parts – required to accomplish their mission. Deployed and next-to-deploy units will remain our priority in the current fiscally-constrained environment while we increasingly experience risk to non-deployed unit readiness.

The most acute readiness concerns are found in our aviation units. Approximately 80% of our aviation units lack the minimum number of ready basic aircraft (RBA) for training, and we are significantly short ready aircraft for wartime requirements. Recapitalization of attack helicopters and reset of heavy lift helicopters are two examples of ways we are addressing RBA shortfalls. Our tactical fighter and attack squadrons suffer from shortages in aircraft availability due to increased wear on aging airframes subjected to continuing modernization delays. The impact of reduced funding levels on our depot level maintenance capacity still resonates today.

We have temporarily reduced the number of aircraft assigned to our fighter-attack and heavy lift squadrons. We simply do not have the available aircraft to meet our squadrons' requirements. This means that flight hour averages per crew per month are below the minimum standards required to achieve and maintain adequate flight time and training and readiness levels. Although deployed squadrons remain trained for their assigned mission, next-to-deploy squadrons are often achieving the minimum readiness goals just prior to deployment. Reduced acquisition rates for the F-35 and the CH-53K require the Marine Corps to continue to operate legacy aircraft well beyond their planned lifespan. Every dollar decremented from our procurement of future systems increases both the cost and complexity of maintaining our aged legacy systems beyond their projected life. Every dollar spent on aviation modernization now has a direct positive effect on current and future aviation readiness.

We currently maintain higher ground equipment readiness than what we experience within our aviation community, but that is small consolation given the age of most of this ground equipment. With Congress' sustained support of our reset effort, the Marine Corps has reset over 90 percent of its legacy ground equipment. Despite this effort, underlying readiness issues exist. Non-deployed forces experience supply degradation as they source low density equipment requirements in support of deployed, task organized units such as our SPMAGTFs. These equipment shortfalls create training gaps for non-deployed units preparing for their next deployment. Our most important ground legacy capabilities continue to age as modernization efforts are at minimum production rates due to limited available resources. Our Amphibious Assault Vehicles (AAVs) are a prime example. Our AAVs are now more than four decades old. Our AAV Survivability Upgrade (SU) Program will sustain and marginally enhance the capability of the legacy AAV, but will not replace any of these nearly obsolete legacy vehicles. The average age of our Light Armored Vehicle (LAV) fleet is 26 years; our oldest vehicle is 34 years old. There is currently no program identified to replace this capable but outdated platform, and yet we continue to incur increased costs with the LAV Obsolescence Program to extend its life. Our AAVs and LAVs are two of the four systems that consume 50 percent of the Marine Corps' annual depot maintenance budget. There is significant cost associated with maintaining and sustaining any legacy systems without a proportional capability increase associated with that investment. As we continue to spend limited fiscal resources to sustain legacy systems as a

result of deferred modernization, we risk steadily losing our capability advantage against potential adversaries.

Current readiness shortfalls require additional operations and maintenance resources, and we have exhausted our internal options. Additional resources would facilitate exercises and training and correct repair parts shortfalls, while specifically addressing aviation specific operations and maintenance funding. In sum, the Marine Corps has a plan to regain and sustain unit readiness. With your support, we can execute our plan to achieve required organizational readiness.

Joint Force Requirements and Capacity to Respond

The 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) and fiscal constraints directed the Marine Corps to decrease its end strength from 202,000 to 182,000. 2014 QDR assessments and assumptions identified limited global security challenges compared to what we face today. We must continue to counter violent extremist organizations and deter both an emboldened China and a more aggressive Russia. As a result, the need for deployed and forward stationed Marines has not diminished while the size of the force has decreased. Our current end strength challenges our ability to support Joint Force requirements while simultaneously maintaining the minimum adequate time at home stations and bases to reconstitute our units and train for the full range of military operations prior to next deployment. At our current end strength, the operational tempo is creating significant and unsustainable strain on the force.

Increased support for both equipment readiness and force structure levels remain critical requirements to improve our readiness. Time is equally as vital as funding to generate required readiness levels. Our sustainable deployment to dwell (D2D) ratio is 1:3, which means a deployment of six months is followed by a period of 18 months at home station. Units require adequate home station time to conduct personnel turnover; equipment reset and maintenance; and complete a comprehensive individual, collective, and cohesive unit training program. Units need this period to ensure they are ready to meet all core and assigned Mission Essential Tasks (METs) prior to re-deploying.

These challenges are compounded by the requirements on today's force. Those requirements place a 1:2 D2D ratio on many of our units and capabilities. The current ratio equates to a home station training period one third less than what our best military judgment and experience tells us is necessary and sustainable. Some units and personnel that possess critical high demand, low

density capabilities and skill sets currently operate below a 1:2 D2D ratio. Portions of Marine aviation experience operational tempo below a 1:2 D2D ratio. Our tiltrotor MV-22 Ospreys, deployed in conjunction with KC-130J aerial refueling aircraft, provide previously unthinkable reach and flexibility to the Joint Force. Deployment requirements have also brought both communities to unsustainable D2D ratios. We recently reduced the number of those aircraft assigned to our SPMAGTFs in order to move these communities closer to a sustainable path. The capabilities provided to the Joint Force will not change; however, capacity will decrease. With increasing demand, resource limitations will further reduce Joint Force capacity and/or incur risk for home station units required for major combat operations. Some of our formations lack the requisite days of supply to sustain a major conflict beyond the initial weeks. The Marine Corps continues to support existing operational requirements, but we may not have the required capacity – the “ready bench” - to respond to larger crises at the readiness levels and timelines required.

High Quality People

The success of our Marine Corps relies upon the high quality, character, and capabilities of our individual Marines and civilians; they are the cornerstone of our readiness. Since the establishment of the All-Volunteer Force over 40 years ago through the millennial generation of today, we have successfully recruited and retained the high caliber men and women we need to operate effectively in the global security environment. Nearly 70 percent of our Marines are serving in their first enlistment, and approximately 35,000 Marines leave the Marine Corps each year. They must be replaced with the same high quality men and women. Our recruiting efforts continue to succeed in providing highly talented, patriotic men and women to replace those Marines who loyally served before. 99.89% of our newest Marines and recruits are high school graduates. This speaks to the quality of the Marines that make up our force. Despite our continued successes, we must continue to seek ways to maintain the high quality people who will comprise tomorrow’s Marine Corps. We must closely track our ability to recruit and retain our most highly qualified and skilled Marines. In order to retain Marines on our team, we require the resources to offer incentives to Marines with experience, critical skills and valuable specialties.

Marine Corps Force 2025, a year-long, comprehensive, bottom-up review of the force identified various end-strengths and the associated capabilities and modernization required to

operate in the future security environment. Through this process, we determined that we need to increase active component end strength to at least 194,000, to build new capabilities that will deter, defeat and deny adversaries and meet future Joint Force requirements. An increase of 3,000 Marines per year maintains a rate of growth consistent with effective recruiting and accession while maintaining our high standards and ensuring a balanced force. We thank you for passing the 2017 NDAA that authorizes 185,000 active component Marines. Your authorization, combined with the appropriations we still require, puts your Marine Corps on the right path to realize necessary growth that will enhance readiness.

Installation Capability

Marine Corps installations are the power projection platforms that generate our readiness; they build, train and launch combat-ready forces. Our installations provide the capability and capacity we need to support the force. This includes our two depot maintenance facilities, which provide responsive and scalable depot maintenance support. While prioritizing deployed readiness, we defer infrastructure and facility investments and modernization necessary to sustain and train our Marine Corps for the 21st century. The continued deferment of Facility Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization (FSRM) requires increased infrastructure investment now to ensure that future FSRM requirements costs do not increase. We ask for your continued support to restore and modernize our facilities.

In addition to facilities sustainment and recapitalization, we require investment in military construction (MILCON). Those investments will support the fielding of new equipment and simulation systems that facilitate improved training standards and operational readiness enhancements. Improvements in training areas, to include aerial and ground ranges, require your support for special use airspace and additional land to replace inadequate facilities.

Modernization

Modernization is the foundation of our future readiness to deter and counter growing threats. Investing in and accelerating our modernization programs directly correlate to improved overall readiness. Previous decrements to our modernization efforts deferred and delayed our critical future programs and forced us to continue investment in aged legacy systems that lack the capabilities required for the 21st century. Over time, legacy systems continue to cost more to

repair and sustain. Simultaneously, we incur the opportunity costs associated with the delayed fielding of replacement systems and the increased capabilities they will provide. When we accelerate modernization, we reduce unit costs, achieve efficiencies and save taxpayer money.

Our Aviation Modernization Plan requires acceleration after suffering recent delays, many attributed to funding deficiencies. This modernization plan has proven its worth. Our MV-22 Ospreys expand the operational reach of Marines supporting Joint Force requirements. Increasing the procurement of the F-35 and CH-53K will result in similar and greater Marine aviation capability improvements. Our first operational F-35 squadron relocated to Iwakuni, Japan last month. The squadron will deploy the F-35B as part of a MEU for the first time in 2018. We look forward to the stand-up of our first F-35C squadron, further enhancing the 5th generation capabilities of our Navy-Marine Corps Team. The CH-53K Heavy Lift Replacement remains critical to maintaining the battlefield mobility our force requires. It will nearly triple the lift capacity of the aircraft it is replacing. The acceleration of these key modernization programs will directly improve our readiness and allow us to retire aircraft that have reached or exceeded their intended life.

To modernize our ground combat element and ensure success against increasingly capable 21st century threats, we need to accelerate investments in our ground systems. We need to replace our 40-year old AAV fleet soonest. The procurement of Joint Light Tactical Vehicles as planned will incrementally replace our High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles that we began operating over 30 years ago and that are still in use today. This needs to be accelerated. There is currently no replacement program for our legacy LAV fleet. We need to develop and invest in a next generation replacement for this system. Additionally, we need to establish programs that develop, procure and deliver active protection systems, counter-UAS and increased long-range precision fires capabilities. The Marine Corps will need your support to recapitalize and modernize these key ground capabilities required for the future operating environment.

Amphibious platforms provide the sovereignty, strategic mobility, unmatched logistical support, operational reach, and forcible entry capability required to deter and, when necessary, defeat our Nation's adversaries. Our amphibious capability is a centerpiece to the operational success of the Navy-Marine Corps Team. Our amphibious concepts - our Naval character and expeditionary mindset - have been validated by history, and we will remain agents of change in

the future. As the operating environment changes, the Marine Corps will continue to innovate as we implement our new Marine Corps Operating Concept (MOC). The availability of amphibious shipping remains paramount to our readiness, responsiveness and the MOC. The Nation's amphibious warship requirement remains at 38. The current inventory of 31 vessels falls well short of this requirement. Recurrent maintenance challenges in the aging amphibious fleet significantly exacerbate that shortfall. The current and enduring gap of amphibious warships to requirements inhibits our Navy-Marine Corps Team from training to our full capabilities, impedes our shared ability to respond to an emergent crisis, and increases the strain on our current readiness. We will explore procurement strategies including the possibility of block buys and accelerating schedules that offer the best value for the taxpayer and allow us to retain skilled artisans in our shipyards. Along with increased amphibious ship capacity and modernization, we require the funding for the associated surface connectors that transport our Marines from ship-to-shore, including the programmed replacement of the Landing Craft Air Cushioned and Landing Craft Utility platforms. These investments will improve our overall amphibious capability and capacity.

The 5th generation Marine Corps for the 21st century must dominate the information domain. We must both enable and protect our ability to command and control (C2) Marines distributed across an area of operations. This requires transforming MAGTF C2 capabilities through a unified network environment that is ready, responsive and resilient. Recently fielded C2 systems provide a significantly increased capability associated with maneuver across the battlespace. We require support from the Congress to fully field these capabilities to the tactical edge, both in our ground and aviation platforms. These are examples of modern capabilities that will facilitate improved battlefield awareness to and from small, dispersed tactical units. As warfare evolves into a battle of signatures and detection, improvements such as these are vital to maximize our Marines' protection and effectiveness.

For too long, we have balanced the cost of our modernization efforts against our current readiness by extending and refreshing many of our legacy systems. While we judge these risks to be at manageable levels today, those risks are increasing and they are yet more examples of the trade-offs we are required to make due to fiscal reductions that accompany operational demand increases. The continued support of this Congress can mitigate and reverse these risks.

Conclusion

On behalf of all of our Marines, Sailors - many deployed and in harm's way today - and their families and the civilians that support their service, we thank the Congress and this committee for this opportunity to discuss the key challenges your Marine Corps faces. I thank you for your support as articulated in the recent 2017 NDAA. While much work needs to be done, the authorizations within, coupled with sufficient funding and the repeal of the BCA, will begin to put us on a path to rebuild and sustain your Marine Corps for the 21st century. Our FY18 plan will require adjustment for decisions in FY17 NDAA authorizations. We need to carry over decisions for FY17 and FY18 into our FYDP planning. Along with your authorization, we ask for the continued support of this Congress to appropriate the funds required to rebuild your Marine Corps. Additional end strength authorized by the Congress will help put us on the path to generate both the capabilities and capacity required in the complex operating environment our Nation faces. Additional funds will provide the "ready bench" our Nation requires and the infrastructure the force needs to train and sustain itself. Our future readiness relies upon increased procurement and modernization funding that will facilitate amphibious ship capacity and allow us to off ramp the continued funding for sustaining legacy systems. We have a plan to reset, recapitalize and modernize your Marine Corps into a 5th generation force for the 21st century. With fiscal stability and predictability and increased resources, we will provide the Expeditionary Force in Readiness our Nation requires to protect its interests and security. With the support of the 115th Congress, we will move forward with our plan and vision to ensure your Marine Corps is organized, manned, trained and equipped to assure our allies, deter and, when necessary, defeat our adversaries.