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THE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

STATEMENT OF

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BEFORE THE

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

SUBJECT:

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INSPECTOR GENERAL AND THE
SERVICES INSPECTOR GENERALS: ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND
OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

APRIL 15, 2021

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Chairwoman Speier, Ranking Member Banks, and military personnel subcommittee members – Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today along with my colleagues to discuss our roles and responsibilities as Service Inspectors General (IGs).

The Inspector General of the Marine Corps (IGMC) is the senior investigative official within the Marine Corps and the principal advisor to the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Secretary of the Navy on all matters concerning inspections and administrative investigations in the Marine Corps. IGMC supports the Secretary and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to promote Marine Corps institutional effectiveness, efficiency, discipline, ethics, integrity, and combat readiness. I communicate directly with the Secretary of the Navy, the Department of Defense Inspector General, and the Naval Inspector General on matters concerning the Marine Corps.

IGMC's staff performs its vital role through impartial and independent inspections, assessments, inquiries, and administrative investigations made without influence, pressure, or coercion. IGMC's findings are reported to the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and when appropriate, the Secretary of the Navy. Ultimately, the Service leadership determines and takes any appropriate action related to the information IGMC provides. To ensure transparency, IGMC personnel have unrestricted access, up to an individual's level of clearance, to any information within the Department, when required in the course of their duties.

The IGMC team is supplemented by 41 command IGs who serve as a functional extension of the IGMC. Throughout the Marine Corps, every commanding general or general officer level commander has their own IG team that operates within the authorities of the individual commander. My office provides training, support, and oversight for these local command IGs.

Although the level of authority and sphere of influence varies, all IGs have the same fundamental duties and responsibility to conduct inspections; investigate allegations of fraud, waste, abuse of authority; provide assistance; and monitor and report on intelligence oversight.

Marine Corps IGs conduct inspections to assess, assist, and enhance a unit's ability to prepare for and execute its assigned mission. Purposeful, coordinated, and instructive inspections assess a unit's compliance with orders and regulations and seek to identify the root causes of any challenges, particularly those beyond the capability of commanders to solve within their own means. Following each inspection, inspected commander receives feedback and must provide us with a corrective action report that addresses noted problems.

Our IGs also conduct administrative investigation into allegations of fraud, waste, inefficiency, and related improprieties throughout the Marine Corps. IGMC does not investigate crimes and all allegations of criminal activity are referred to the Naval Criminal Investigative Service. To preserve the independence and objectivity of the individual command IGs, IGMC assumes responsibility for all allegations against senior officials or related to military whistleblower reprisal, unless DoD OIG assumes responsibility for the case. In the event of any conflict of interest at a local command, IGMC will refer the case to a higher level command for investigation or other appropriate action, or take responsibility of the case. When IGMC is conflicted, we are obligated to refer an issue to either the Naval Inspector General or Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General (DoD OIG).

The majority of complaints and allegations of wrongdoing we receive come in through the Marine Corps Hotline, which is part of the assistance function of the IGs. The Hotline provides all individuals with a confidential means by which to make a complaint or seek assistance with an issue that impacts them. This tool is particularly valuable to those who do not

know where to get help, or are hesitant to seek help from their chain of command. Working hand-in-hand with IGs across the Marine Corps and DoD IG network, assistance requests from each individual contact, well over 2,000 per year, get to the appropriate person, agency, or unit for resolution. The IGMC provides a quality assurance review of the response from each Marine Corps entity for hotline requests.

Marine Corps IGs also ensure that intelligence activities that collect, retain, and disseminate information about U.S. persons operate consistent with governing regulations and laws.

Finally, the IGs embed teaching and training into everything they do. We are the standard-bearers for the Marine Corps and seek to ensure units and individual's know, or know where to go, for an example of what right looks like.

Although the IGMC supports and communicates with the Secretary of the Navy and the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Statute requires our cooperation with the DoD OIG for all IG matters. This cooperation is seen most in the assistance and investigations functions. DoD OIG requires notification from IGMC any time there is an allegation of misconduct by a senior official or complaint of military whistleblower reprisal. In some cases, DoD OIG will assume investigative responsibility, and in all cases DoD OIG provides oversight and records both IGMC and the Marine Corps' disposition of the case. This notification process and oversight, much like IGMC's oversight with local inspectors general, ensures transparency and impartiality.

Frequently, DoD OIG refers Marine Corps related cases to our office for action or information. IGMC routes these cases to the appropriate agency or local command IG and provides oversight and a quality review of the local IG's handling of the case. DoD provides additional oversight and recording for action referrals. These layers of oversight ensure

independence, transparency, thoroughness, and compliance with applicable regulations.

Although DoD OIG reviews IGMC's work, the ultimate disposition for any IG finding rests with Service leadership.

IGMC's relationship with DoD OIG is enhanced through quarterly meetings of the Defense Council on Integrity and Efficiency, which include members of the entire DoD oversight enterprise to assess governance, training and priorities. IGMC also participates in various DoD working groups, the quarterly Service IGs Meetings.

The relationship between DoD OIG and the IGMC, and the IGMC and the local command IGs is similar. This broad and varied network ensures each commander enjoys the benefit of an IG to manage local issues, conduct local inspections, investigate local matters, and keep a pulse of things that effect the morale, discipline, and climate of the unit. Whereas the IGMC serves as the eyes and ears of the Commandant, the local IGs serve as the eyes and ears of the individual commander.

Chairwoman Speier, Ranking Member Banks, and military personnel subcommittee members, thank you for your continued support of the Marine Corps. I look forward to your questions.