

STATEMENT
OF
LIEUTENANT GENERAL REX C. McMILLIAN
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS RESERVE
BEFORE THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS
ON
MARINE CORPS READINESS
6 MARCH 2018

Introduction

Chairman Wilson, Ranking Member Bordallo and distinguished members of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness, it is my privilege to appear before you today to provide an overview on the current state of readiness within the Marine Corps Reserve.

As the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps testified, fiscal instability, resulting from persistent Continuing Resolutions and looming and actual government shutdowns, produce the most significant risk to our readiness. Reserve Marines have 38 training days per year (24 inactive duty days and 14 annual training days). Missed training opportunities are often unrecoverable in terms of personnel, material, and training readiness, while morale and retention of the force suffers. During the orderly shutdown on January 20, 2018, two to three training days were lost. Some units had multi-day or week-long exercises which were cancelled or cut short. Ultimately, 7,793 personnel across 62 units (20 percent of Marine Forces Reserve) had their readiness impacted due to their drill weekend being cancelled or reduced, resulting in lost training opportunities.

Although these lost opportunities negatively impact the Reserve Component's ability to serve side-by-side with their Active Component counterparts, your Marine Corps Reserve has been fully engaged across the globe over the past 16+ years of combat operations – serving as an essential shock absorber and force multiplier. Our focus remains on maintaining the ability to provide manned, trained, equipped, and well-led forces capable of augmenting, reinforcing, and supporting the Active Component. With the continued support of Congress, it will further strengthen our readiness and ensure we remain ready to fight and win across the range of military operations and in all warfighting domains.

A Total Force

The United States Marine Corps remains the Nation's forward deployed, agile, Expeditionary Force in Readiness. As the Commandant of the Marine Corps previously stated, we are one Marine Corps – a Total Force Marine Corps. For approximately eight percent of the Department of Defense (DoD) budget, your Corps provides the American people with an exceptionally capable, extremely affordable, immediately responsive, and lethal national security force. As an integral part of the Total Force, the Marine Corps Reserve plays a key role in providing that national security force.

The critical capabilities provided by the Marine Corps Reserve to the Total Force increases the lethality of the Corps and contributes to the competitive advantage maintained over our adversaries. Over the past year, the Marine Corps Reserve supported combatant commanders by providing forces focused on combat operations, crisis prevention, crisis response, and theater security cooperation. Global deployments, along with participation in Service, Joint, and multi-national exercises, develop the depth of experience of the Reserve Force, ensuring the Marine Corps Reserve is relevant, ready, and responsive to meet combatant commanders' requirements for highly trained general-purpose forces.

The demand for the Marine Corps' unique capabilities has increased, requiring more Reserve Component activations of units and ad hoc formations to produce enabling capabilities across the range of military operations. Your Marine Corps Reserve will continue to deploy and integrate with the Active Component to meet combatant commander high-priority requirements through the use of existing mobilization authorities. In 2018, it is anticipated that Marine Forces Reserve will support the combatant commanders by mobilizing in excess of 2,500 Reservists and

providing almost 12,000 Marines for a multitude of theater-specific exercises and security cooperation events. These operations and exercises greatly increase the Reserve Component's readiness, which enhances interoperability with the Active Component, Joint Forces, and our allies.

Predictability

Our Force Generation Model provides a level of predictability for force planners and our Reserve Marines, while maintaining the "train as we fight" philosophy. The Model provides our Reservists, their families, and their employers the ability to plan for upcoming duty requirements five years and beyond. This enhances personnel readiness by empowering service members to achieve the critical balance between family, civilian careers, and service to our Nation while enabling informed employers to plan for and manage the temporary absence of valued employees.

We ensure units and personnel are ready to meet any challenge by employing a Force Generation Model that rotates Marine Reserve units through a five-year Training and Readiness Plan. At any given time, the Force Generation Model enables the Reserves to provide combat ready units and detachments based on major contingency operation plans and the Corps' Force Management Plan. This ready bench includes Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Companies, Civil Affairs Groups, large-scale logistical augmentation, four infantry battalions, artillery and aviation capabilities, as well other critical enablers. In total, more than 4,000 Reserve Marines and Sailors are prepared to augment and reinforce Active Component forces rapidly in support of a contingency response or as part of a theater security cooperation mission.

Personnel

Marines, Sailors, and our civilian Marines are the foundation of all that we do. The resources we dedicate to sustaining and developing this foundation directly contribute to the

success of our institution. The vast majority of the Marine Corps Selected Reserve's authorized end strength of 38,500 fall under Marine Forces Reserve. Embedded with these Marines are 1,800 Active and Reserve component Sailors who serve critical roles in the operational, medical, dental, and spiritual readiness of our Reserve Force. In addition to the Marines and Sailors of the Selected Reserve, Marine Forces Reserve administratively controls approximately 65,000 Marines who serve in the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR). Marine Forces Reserve continues to monitor the mobilization viability of these IRR Marines who have fulfilled their active service commitment and returned to civilian life.

Recruiting and retaining high quality Marines remains essential to the Marine Corps' reputation as the Nation's Force in Readiness. Marine Forces Reserve enjoys high affiliation and retention rates enhanced through various incentive programs aimed at meeting authorized end strength and retaining our most talented Marines. Your support to these critical programs has helped maintain our overall personnel end strength to 99 percent of the total requirement, with a grade and Military Occupational Specialty match rate of 85 percent. This high rate of personnel readiness is not only reflective of the health of the force, but directly contributes to our overall operational readiness. Your continued support for incentives that promote service in our Reserve Force will ensure our ability to recruit and retain the very best service members.

Equipment

Reserve Component units remain highly interoperable with their Active Component counterparts due to the Marine Corps' Total Force approach to equipment fielding and management. Active and Reserve Component Forces are manned, trained and equipped to the same standards, facilitating the seamless employment of Reserve Component Forces to meet combatant commander requirements. Marine Forces Reserve mission essential equipment

readiness levels are sufficient and capable of supporting all home station training requirements, as well as current operational deployments, with the exception of several select aviation units.

In the Reserve Component, personnel resources to identify and conduct maintenance are limited to the small full-time support staffs at each Reserve Training Center. These staffs are augmented by Reserve Marines during the monthly drill and two week annual training periods. Focusing these limited resources on the combat essential readiness reportable items constrains routine preventative and corrective maintenance on the remainder of equipment. Recent modernizations, coupled with the increase in equipment density and complexity, have compounded this challenge.

For many years, Marine Forces Reserve has mitigated risk to maintenance readiness in two ways. First, by continually refining the Training Allowance, which is the portion of the unit's full Table of Equipment kept on-hand at the Reserve Training Center. Our goal is to balance the minimum amount of equipment necessary to effectively conduct training with the amount of equipment that can reasonably be maintained within the personnel and fiscal resource constraints. Second, by leveraging Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) dollars to pay for mobile maintenance support teams from Marine Corps Logistics Command to travel to Reserve Training Centers and augment the limited organic maintenance capacity. However, as the demand for Reserve Component Forces has significantly increased – from 126 exercises, missions, and operations in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 to 149 scheduled for FY 2018 – we anticipate increased usage, and subsequent wear and tear on both our military and individual combat equipment sets. Consequently, our maintenance requirements, demand for secondary repairables, and replenishment of gear have out-paced previous forecasts. Congressional support for our amended FY 2018 Operations and Maintenance, Marine Corps Reserve budget request, to include OCO, is

paramount to our continued success in maintaining high equipment readiness.

The top procurement priority of the Marine Corps Reserve is the KC-130J Super Hercules. The Active Component has fully fielded the KC-130J Super Hercules. However, the remaining 17 of 24 Reserve Component KC-130J aircraft are not scheduled to be fully fielded until 2026. This extended fielding timeline forces the Reserve Component to simultaneously operate the KC-130J and the legacy KC-130T aircraft over the next eight years. These two aircraft have vastly different logistics, maintenance, and aircrew requirements, resulting in an increased outlay of resources to maintain the readiness of the Reserve Component KC-130 Squadrons.

Training

Marine Forces Reserve participates in the service-level Integrated Training Exercise (ITX) aboard Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, California. This exercise consists of two battalions conducting live-fire and maneuver exercises, featuring Reserve Component Forces from the Marine Air-Ground Task Force elements. This is one of the few opportunities that the ground, aviation, and logistics combat elements, under the command of a regimental headquarters, are able to come together and coordinate all warfighting actions to operate as a Marine Air-Ground Task Force under live fire and maneuver conditions. The ITX is constantly updated to challenge our Reserve Force with the most realistic training possible and our units participate based on future activation potential per the Marine Forces Reserve FYs 2018-2022 Training and Readiness Plan. ITX participation improves combat readiness, efficiency in Total Force integration, and enables more rapid activation response times at the battalion and squadron level.

Marine Forces Reserve maximizes participation in continental United States-based training

events. In FY 2017, Reserve Component Marines and Sailors participated in Exercise Northern Strike, a joint, combined-arms, live-fire exercise emphasizing close air support, joint fire support, and coordinated maneuver with fires. The exercise also provides highly sought after amphibious training that is executed aboard Camp Grayling, Michigan, at the Joint Maneuver Training Center. Exercise Northern Strike provides an opportunity for Reserve Marines to train alongside Army and Michigan Air National Guard forces, as well as Canadian forces, and has become an integral part of the Reserve Component training continuum. These types of exercises ensure our Marines maintain the highest levels of proficiency and readiness to integrate with the Active Component to support the requirements of the combatant commanders.

In order to preserve fiscal and materiel resources and test the limits of expected operations, we also maximize training efficiencies by optimizing the use of training simulators to enhance readiness wherever possible. Additionally, with Reserve units only having 38 training days per FY to train to mission essential tasks and also ensure all Service mandated annual training requirements are satisfied, it is essential for the Marine Corps Reserve to capitalize on non-traditional training methods such as online training. Expanding our use of simulators and online training will preserve valuable training time and also enable units to make the most of that limited training time during drill weekends.

Facilities

Marine Forces Reserve occupies facilities in 47 states, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. These facilities include 27 owned and 133 tenant Reserve Training Centers, three family housing sites, one permanent barracks, three emergency troop housing barracks, and one General Officer Quarters. Although some sites are located on major

DoD installations, most are situated within civilian communities, ranging from neighborhoods to industrial and commercial districts. We continue to improve the maintenance and security of our facilities to ensure the safety of our Marines and Sailors and provide an effective training and mobilization platform to support the readiness of the Force.

Sixty-six percent of the facilities budget supports the sustainment and maintenance of existing infrastructure and operating cost of providing day-to-day facilities support. However, those operating costs steadily increase with the age of the buildings. We have improved the overall readiness of our facilities inventory through our Facilities Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization (FSRM) support program and maximized the impact of our budget through divestiture and demolition of excess footprint.

There has been a focused and ongoing effort to improve overall force protection at all of our sites by working with our service partners and the National Guard for joint occupied facilities. Numerous protection assessments and security engineering reports have been conducted at our facilities to assist and develop designs to mitigate protection concerns, specifically physical security. These assessments have identified physical security shortfalls and served to prioritize security enhancements to ensure our sites and Marines are secure in the facilities where they work and drill. Although we have leveraged additional funding and the risks are mitigated by the tactics, techniques, and procedures that each individual unit employs, these emergent force protection requirements have placed added strain on our budget.

The Marine Corps' Military Construction, Naval Reserve (MCNR) program focuses on providing construction for new and enduring capabilities, as well as recapitalization of our aging existing facilities. The construction provided by the annual authorization of MCNR funding is an important factor in advancing our facilities support mission as we optimize our force laydown

throughout the nation.

The combined effects of our FSRM and MCNR programs have steadily reduced the number of inadequate or substandard Reserve Training Centers and enabled better support to the Force. Continued funding for our facilities program is essential for us to improve the overall physical infrastructure that reinforces the mission readiness of our units, divest of failing infrastructure, and modernize capabilities.

Health Services and Behavioral Health

Marine leaders have a moral obligation to ensure the health and wellness of the Nation's Marine Corps Reservists, Sailors under our charge, and their families. We strive to improve medical readiness through a robust Reserve Health Readiness Program within Marine Forces Reserve and an accurate monitoring, identification, and notification of the unit-level actions necessary to attain readiness goals. Our Health Services priority is to ensure the DoD goal of 85 percent Total Force Medically Ready. During FY 2017, Marine Forces Reserve met that goal with individual medical and dental readiness rates of 85.4 percent and 90.7 percent, respectively. Additionally, our Health Services personnel participate in Force Readiness Assistance & Assessment Program unit inspections and audits which provide oversight at unit level and the ability to monitor policy adherence and readiness.

Further, we market all of our behavioral health initiatives and programs through our Marine Forces Reserve portal website and during key Marine Corps forums throughout the year. These programs include Suicide Prevention, Post-Deployment Health Reassessment, Operational Stress Control and Readiness, Yellow Ribbon Reintegration, and Drug Demand Reduction. Your continued support of our behavioral health programs is greatly appreciated.

Sexual Assault Prevention & Response

Sexual assault is a complex problem that is often interrelated with other readiness challenges, behavioral health issues, and destructive behaviors. Marine Forces Reserve remains focused on executing solutions to address the continuum of destructive behaviors, with the goal of eradicating sexual assault within our ranks. To accomplish this goal, Marine Forces Reserve has expanded the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program to seven full-time employees who provide supportive services across the geographically-dispersed force and are capable of supporting service members and adult family members at all 160 sites.

Our prevention strategy is holistic and integrated with other programs that support the prevention effort, such as the Equal Opportunity, Family Readiness, Spiritual Readiness Initiatives, and Behavioral Health Programs. We emphasize setting the example of discipline and respect at all levels of command by encouraging a positive, retaliation-free, command climate. Marine Forces Reserve is committed to eradicating sexual assault while responding with the highest quality of supportive services and advocacy to those who need it.

Conclusion

Despite the challenges facing us in today's strategic environment, the Marine Corps remains our Nation's crisis response force and will continue to be most ready when our Nation is least ready. When our Nation calls, the American people expect quick, decisive action from Marines – both the Active and Reserve Components. As part of the Marine Corps Total Force, the Marine Corps Reserve must remain manned, trained, and equipped to provide lethal forces to the Active Component to respond across the operational spectrum from disaster relief to full scale combat operations. Despite today's unstable operating environment being further complicated by fiscal uncertainty, it is essential for us to remain engaged in current operations, maintain our warfighting

readiness, and reset our equipment – while also taking the necessary strides to modernize the force.

With your continued unwavering support, we will make pragmatic decisions on how to best

balance our available resources between current commitments and future readiness requirements.

Semper Fidelis!