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HOUSE ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE**

**STATEMENT OF
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COMMANDING GENERAL
MARINE CORPS COMBAT DEVELOPMENT COMMAND/DEPUTY COMMANDANT
FOR COMBAT DEVELOPMENT
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
BEFORE THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TACTICAL AIR AND LAND FORCES
CONCERNING
FY 2006 BUDGET REQUEST AND FYDP
ON
MARCH 16, 2005**

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Opening

Chairman Weldon, Ranking Member Abercrombie, distinguished members of the Subcommittee, it is my privilege to report to you on the status of your Marine Corps including force structure initiatives, current force protection program initiatives and other major ground component acquisition programs as part of the fiscal year 2006 budget request and future years defense program. The Marine Corps remains firmly committed to warfighting excellence, and the support of the Congress and the American people has been indispensable to our success. Our number one priority is fighting the war, and resetting the force for the future. Your sustained commitment to improving our Nation's armed forces to meet the challenges of today, as well as those of the future, is vital to the security of our nation. On behalf of all Marines, I thank the Subcommittee for your continued support and commitment to the readiness of your Marine Corps. Your support has made us more effective in the fight, saved lives, and prepared for an uncertain future.

Force Protection Programs

Rapid equipping initiatives. Close coordination with forward deployed forces enables us to address our Marines' needs in Iraq and Afghanistan. While no armoring scheme can protect completely against anti-tank or tandem mines, very large IEDs, suicide vehicle bombs, etc., vehicle armoring, personal protection, and counter IED items have been fielded using a combination of internal reprogramming actions and supplemental funds provided by the Congress. For equipment in particular, the Marine Corps attacks along several axes to provide needed capabilities. We exploit Service and Joint opportunities to pursue rapid development and fielding of equipment to our forward deployed forces. In November of 2003, we established the Urgent Universal Needs Statement (UUNS) process to rapidly translate mission-essential needs of Marines in theater to fielded materiel solutions. Operation Respond, a companion effort under the auspices of the Secretary of the Navy, provided a venue for deployed Marines to identify emerging requirements. Finally close integration with the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat (JIEDD) Integrated Process Team (IPT) has yielded counter-IED technologies that continue to save lives. Through these programs, over \$540 million has been directed to meet more than 120 identified requirements in support of our deployed Marines. Of this amount, \$487 million has funded vehicle armoring initiatives.

Force Protection. One of our primary concerns is protecting Marines, Sailors and equipment essential to mission accomplishment. We focus on fielding capabilities across the detect-collect-interrupt-mitigate force protection continuum to address this concern. Detection

enablers include x-ray technology in Z-Backscatter Vans that allow Marines at entry control points and mobile checkpoints to detect vehicle bombs, explosives, and weapons. Highlighted by our creed that every Marine is a rifleman, it is these Marines, armed with their rifles and backed by their training, that provide the first line of detection in the commander's force protection plan. Dragon Eye Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) at the company level and Scan Eagle UAVs at the Regiment and Division provide collection capability crucial to protecting the force. The Marine Corps' family of robots, from the Dragon Runner Mobile Ground Sensor to the expendable "Bombot," interrupts the enemy's attack cycle through remote interrogation of targets and limited explosive neutralization. Finally, should these measures fail; all personnel under Marine command have a complete set (front and rear plates) of Small Arms Protective Inserts (SAPI) body armor issued before entering Iraq. We are replacing these plates with an enhanced version just developed and in initial production. Although we have only had two plates penetrated in two years of war, and the Army roughly the same, the enhanced plates provide some increased protection we think is worth the investment. We have also established Forward Resuscitative Surgical Suites (FRSS) and shock trauma facilities at strategic locations within one hour travel distance (known as the Golden Hour) of where our Marines are operating, greatly increasing the likelihood of saving life and limb for our wounded Marines and Sailors.

A complete and detailed discussion of Marine Corps force protection initiatives is on record from my report to the House Appropriations Committee, Defense Subcommittee concerning Force Protection on February 16, 2005. Based on the questions in Chairman Weldon's letter inviting me to testify, I would like to emphasize our rotary-wing Aviation Survivability Equipment (ASE), Vehicle Hardening, and Counter-IED initiatives.

Rotary-Wing ASE. As a result of Army aviation lessons learned, Navy and Marine Corps aviation Staffs undertook a coordinated rapid fielding initiative of more than \$152M to upgrade ASE for Marine aviation units, preparing to deploy to Iraq in 2004. These efforts focused on ASE to counter infrared man-portable missiles and small arms being employed by insurgents in more advanced anti-aircraft tactics. As a result of the focused efforts by our Navy and Marine Corps aviation maintenance teams and hard-working contractors, every Marine Helicopter engaged in OIF II is today supporting combat operations with upgraded ASE. All deploying aircraft receive the "V2" upgrade to the AAR-47 Missile and Laser Warning Set and the new ALE-47 Countermeasure Dispensing systems; AH-1W aircraft received IR suppressor exhaust modifications to reduce their signatures; AH-1W, UH-1N and KC-130 aircraft have been equipped with the more advanced APR-

39AV2 radar detection system; CH-53E aircraft received interior ballistic armor and new ramp-mounted GAU-21 .50 caliber machine guns; existing IR jamming systems on the CH-46E and KC-130 aircraft were upgraded. CH-46 aircraft received the M-240 7.62 caliber machine guns, lightweight armor, and lightweight armored cockpit seats.

Vehicle Hardening. Providing armor protection to our vehicles has been a critical, iterative and Joint-service process. As the subcommittee is aware, Marine Corps policy is that no unarmored vehicle will leave a Forward Operating Base (FOB). All Marine Corps wheeled tactical vehicles operating outside the FOBs are already armored with either level II or I armor protection. There are over 250 unarmored wheeled tactical vehicles in OIF and OEF that do not require vehicle armor, as they remain always inside the perimeter of our FOBs.

Initially, we had 17 different types of armor, locally fabricated steel and protective measures. Experimenting and adapting to determine the most effective, we moved rapidly with various initiatives to protect our lads. Each successive generation of armor protection throughout the maturation process, from Kevlar blankets to the present, has undergone durability and ballistics testing through U.S. Army or independent civilian testing facilities. In support of equipment fielding for the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), a recent Joint armored vehicle effort between the Army and the Marine Corps resulted in the provision of more than 400 M1114 and M1116 up-armored HMMWVs by the Army to I MEF via Multi-National Corps – Iraq. In addition to these Army-provided HMMWVs, the Marine Corps currently has 4,299 hardened vehicles in the CENTCOM AOR. We have provided armor and ballistic windshields for our HMMWVs, Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacements (MTVRs), Logistics Vehicle Systems (LVSs), and 5-ton-trucks deployed in support of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). This “zonal” armor consists of doors, flanks, tailgates, and underbody as appropriate. In fact, before I MEF returned to Iraq in March 2004 to relieve the 82ND Airborne in the Sunni Triangle's Al Anbar Province, the Marine Corps provided first generation armor for 100 percent of its 3,000+ vehicles. The Marine Corps acquisition and logistics system assembled more than 1,800 sets of these interim armor kits within 6 weeks of receiving the execution order. By September 2004, the Marine Corps identified and initiated a reprogramming of funds in order to upgrade all vehicle armor kits to a second generation of armor consisting of the Marine depot-built 3/8” rolled homogeneous armor (RHA).

To further improve upon our first two generations of armor, the Marine Corps is currently fielding upgraded, “integrated” armor kits on all HMMWVs and MTVR 7 ton trucks. Developed through close coordination of the Marine Corps Systems Command and Marines in the field, this

upgrade is being deployed in support of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). Concurrently, in order to upgrade the armor on our M1043 armored HMMWVs, the Marine Corps will purchase 498 M1114s to replace those M1043s already in Iraq. Those vehicles will replace the M1043s by the end of December 2005.

Production of 3,100 HMMWV Marine Armor Kits (MAK) is underway. The MAK is the result of a cooperative engineering design effort between the U.S. Army and the Marine Corps and is designed to take full advantage of the increased capabilities of the HMMWVA2. Installation of 150 MAKs for 26th MEU's impending deployment have been completed. Installation for HMMWVs in Iraq begin in late February and is ongoing with 25 kits completed at Camp Al Taqaddum. All A-2's will have the kits installed by the end of December 2005. Production deliveries of 1,018 MTRV Armor System (MAS) kits for our 7-ton MTRVs will begin in April. Installation for MTRVs in Iraq are scheduled to begin in May at Camp Al Taqaddum. We should complete installation on all MTRV trucks by August 2006. In support of critical Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) operations, production of 27 hardened engineer vehicles (Cougars) is also underway, with the first 9 already fielded to OIF II. These solutions were designed to provide maximum protection while still providing Marines the ability to rapidly dismount and provide offensive capability wherever needed.

To date, the total amount of funding programmed for USMC armor requirements is \$487.4M (FY03, FY04 and FY05 funding). Of this, \$364.6M has been obligated to contracts. The remaining \$122.8M is currently being negotiated to contracts. Funding received to date has enabled the following:

- Over 3,900 HMMWVs hardened with various configurations of armor ranging from interim add-on armor kit protection (Level II) to factory built armored vehicles (Level I, e.g., M1114 Up-armored HMMWV).
- Over 1,110 MTRVs hardened with Level II armor protection.
- Over 260 Logistics Vehicle Systems trucks and 180 5-ton trucks hardened with Level II armor protection.

Procurement of the required quantity of additional 498 M1114 Up-armored HMMWVs are funded and under contract with deliveries scheduled from July through October 2005.

Procurement quantity of 920 of required 1,850 MTRV 3rd generation MAS armor kits are funded and under contract. Installations can be conducted at a rate of 40 per month and will begin in May 2005. Procurement quantity of 2,750 of the required 5,550 HMMWV 3rd generation MAK armor

kits are funded and under contract. OCONUS installations are already underway (23 kits installed) and will ramp up to a rate of approximately 200 per month until the latest armoring upgrade is complete by the end of December 2005.

Counter-IED. IEDs/VBIEDs continue to be our greatest threat. Explosives are accessible by insurgents, although our arms cache seizures are reducing access. We are attacking this threat along several axes. Our most effective weapon against an IED is a well-trained Marine Squad. Participation in the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat (JIEDD) IPT reviews and seeks solutions to this vulnerability. We are fielding technologies designed to detect/trigger the explosives prior to contact with the troops. These technologies are designed to initiate the IED's electronic triggers. The Marine Corps selected IED Countermeasures Equipment (ICE) because it proved successful in terms of performance against the threats, and could be procured/fielded most expeditiously. The I MEF requirement for 1,066 ICE systems was fully funded, and 702 systems have been delivered in country. . Fielding should be complete during April 05. Although 1,066 systems was the initial requirement, based on requests from our operational commanders, we will buy an additional 2,500 ICE systems with the \$30M requested in FY-05 Supplemental funding. The unit price is \$12,000.

The initial threat from Remote Control (RC) initiated IEDs came from low-frequency, low-power devices such as cheaply made, mass produced garage door openers, key fobs, and door bells. ICE and similar systems use relatively low-power RF energy to jam the signals of RC initiators and prevent them from functioning at a distance, thereby enabling adequate protection. These jammers are intentionally low power to preclude interference between an RF emitter (the jammer) and our own communications systems such as SINCGARS radios and Blue Force communications. Secondly, high power jammers cause greater interference and require more power to operate. Increasing the power amplifier on the jammer also draws more power from vehicle generators, detracting from other vehicle systems and requiring frequency deconfliction with our communication gear. We are striving to balance the best jammers with the least impact on friendly communications while not degrading vehicle performance.

When the enemy began using low frequency, high-power RC initiators, a developmental effort began to address the threats by enhancing the ICE. The Hard to Kill (H2K) upgrade consists of two new sets of cards for the ICE systems that allow ICE to address higher-power threats. H2K tests are ongoing that could enable production as early as this month (March 2005). Cost of the H2K application will exceed \$3,000 per system for the cards and installation. The Army has

ordered 3,000 ICE systems in addition to the 1,066 already ordered and 2,500 planned for procurement by the Marine Corps. All 6,566 systems will get the H2K upgrade to address the range of threats currently being encountered and anticipated in Iraq. Currently, \$12.6M has been requested in the FY 05 Supplemental for 1262 USMC H2K upgrades. An additional \$23M is required to fund the remaining 2304 USMC H2K upgrades.

Cellular, Satellite, Long Range Cordless Telephone and FRS Radio Jammer have become the worldwide number one initiator of IEDs. To date there has been very little high frequency communications threat in our zone. We believe that threat will increase with the expansion of the cell phone infrastructure within Iraq. Cell phones are the most common RC initiators of IEDs in the world. \$2.1M to test current domestic/foreign jamming technology has been funded by ASN (RDA). \$3M of USMC funds is allocated to purchase initial allotment of the winning system. An additional \$30M has been requested in the FY 05 Supplemental to support I MEF's request for 1,000 systems. Testing began during February 2005.

UUNS specific initiatives. In order to adapt to an evolving threat, the Urgent Universal Needs Statement (UUNS) process has provided a way for our operating forces to identify and forward new requirements for weapons and equipment up the chain of command for rapid review and approval –most in under 90 days. Upon rapid approval by the Marine Corps Requirements Oversight Council, the Marine Corps and the Department of the Navy realigned funds as necessary and within permitted reprogramming thresholds. When required by reprogramming authority rules, we have forwarded requests that exceed the established reprogramming thresholds to the Congress for approval. The sources for these reprogramming actions have been our investment account assets. In many cases, the funding was made available by our decision to accept risk and defer the full execution of otherwise approved programs in order to address immediate warfighting needs. Some examples are:

- Vehicle hardening:
 - Purchased factory produced and field expedient armor for nearly 5,000 vehicles
 - Fielded 37 export model M1114 up-armored High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV)
 - Will procure and field 498 M1114s up-armored HMMWVs
 - Producing the Marine Armor Kit (MAK) for HMMWVs and the Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacement (MTVR), the Marine Armor System (MAS) for the Medium

Tactical Vehicle Replacement (installation for both systems will be operationally driven and is planned to begin between Feb and May 05).

- Weapons sights, to include:
 - Advanced Combat Optic Gunsights (ACOG)
 - Thermal Weapons Sights
- Family of Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) equipment including unmanned robotics and blast suits
- Counter Improvised Explosive Device (IED) Jammers
- Hardened Engineer Vehicles – Cougar and Buffalo systems being acquired from the U.S. Army
- Radios: Personal Role Radios, PRC-148, PRC-117F, and Tropo Satellite Support Radios
- Unit Operations Centers
- Night Vision Devices
- Individual body armor
- Backscatter X-Ray machines

The impact of these reprogramming actions has deferred deliveries or caused delays in the execution of other approved procurement programs. This is true across the Department of the Navy, as the Navy too has assisted with funding these initiatives through reprogrammings of their budget to support our operational requirements. The funding required to buy back some of these critical capabilities is included in our Fiscal Year 2005 supplemental request.

Current Ground Force Sustainment Programs

The Marine Corps continues to maximize its available ground force equipment through sustainment and survivability improvement programs in CONUS as well as in theater. We continue to focus on hardening our vehicles with 3rd generation integrated armor kits such as the HMMWV Marine Armor Kits (MAK) and MTRV Armor Systems (MAS). For our HMMWV's, the added weight of armor is being offset by the retrofitting of the vehicle springs and shocks. Our MAS equipped cargo variant MTRVs are having their front suspension replaced with the higher rated wrecker variant suspensions. We are also executing an effort that will replace our existing family of HMMWVs to an upgraded 2 ¼ ton capacity model. Even with these efforts, the high usage rates in a harsh operating environment, coupled with the unavoidable delays of scheduled maintenance due

to combat, are degrading our equipment at an accelerated rate. We anticipate the requirement to replace most of hard-used gear when it is pulled out of Iraq.

USMC participation in the Army's Future Combat Systems acquisition program.

The Marine Corps is actively participating in a Joint effort to leverage the technologies and production planning of the Army's Future Combat Systems (FCS) acquisition program by conducting the necessary Joint Capability Integration and Development System analysis to determine Marine Corps' needs within a joint context.

Our vehicle initiative is evaluating capability needs of armored forces of the future MAGTF. This effort, MAGTF Expeditionary Family of Fighting Vehicles (MEFFV) project, will produce vehicles that complement the Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle program to equip the armored forces of the future MAGTF. MEFFV is a combat vehicle designed to improve the capabilities of the Light Armor and Tank Battalions of the MAGTF and enhance the capabilities of Expeditionary Maneuver Warfare through use of technologies to significantly improve efficiency and lessen the impact of operational and tactical logistics. The MEFFV project is designed to replace the LAV and tank fleets when they reach their respective End-of-Service dates of 2015 and 2030 respectively. Future Combat Systems/MEFFV Joint Program Office (JPO) plan was approved by the Joint Requirement Oversight Council on 1 Mar 04 (JROCM 038-04). This JPO plan is designed to provide a forum to determine if FCS vehicles can suit or be made to suit the material needs of both Services for mounted combat systems with the expectation that such a joint program could reduce life cycle costs, and enhance interoperability between the services.

Further, our memorandum of agreement with the Army assigns Marines full-time to several of the FCS's eighteen systems. We are selectively bonded with the Army's FCS acquisition program, ensuring a joint review of unmanned ground and air vehicle initiatives as well as command and control network integration and interoperability. A Network Systems Integration Working Group has been established between the two services in the Joint Battle Management Command and Control Initiative. With close collaboration and maximum commonality desired within the scope of the requirements, we expect that such joint programs could reduce life cycle costs, and enhance interoperability between the services.

Marine Corps force structure initiative

Force Structure Review Group. In 1991, the Marine Corps began an internal transformation process realizing future conflicts would not have the Corps face a peer competitor. Future wars would be irregular and likely fought against non-state actors as GWOT reflects this reality. Since 1991, examples of transformation initiatives include the creation of Anti-Terrorism battalions (active and reserve), development of the Light Weight 155 howitzer and the Expeditionary Fire Support System (EFSS), a shift in combat development strategies to a “3 Block War” or irregular threat mind set, placing a focus on becoming lighter in order to begin the evolution to future Seabasing concepts, and most recently, adapting units to conduct additional missions that do not conflict with unit design such as artillery units shifting to civil affairs missions once significant fighting dies down. Remaining within the existing force structure, the Corps implemented divestitures such as disestablishing self-propelled artillery units, reducing all artillery batteries from eight to six 155 howitzers, reducing our M1A1 tank forces by one third, and continuously adjusting our total force to stand-up new units and ensure that high demand/critical MOS billets are filled.

In April 2004, the Force Structure Review Group (FSRG) analysis mandated by the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) was initiated and did not complete until late summer. The objective of the FSRG was to review Marine Corps force structure and make recommendations to the Commandant to position the Marine Corps to meet Global War on Terror (GWOT) requirements. This effort resulted in the creation of additional high demand units. The scope of effort included a review of the total force and to reduce or cut manpower from lower demand units. As with previous transformation initiatives, this effort was to be end strength and force structure neutral.

The FSRG made the following recommendations to the Commandant: create the following active duty units - 2 Infantry Battalions, 3 Light Armored Reconnaissance Companies, 3 Reconnaissance Companies, 2 Force Reconnaissance Platoons, and 1 Air & Naval Gunfire Liaison Company; reserve component - 1 Anti-Terrorism Battalion, 2 Light Armored Reconnaissance Companies, and 1 Intelligence Support Battalion; and augment a variety of critical Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) such as PSYOPS, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Human Intelligence (HUMINT), and Civil Affairs. The personnel to stand up these new units and MOSs will come from transfers from existing units and from Military to Civilian Conversions, therefore, an end strength increase for these adaptations is not required. In order to train these new units and

MOSs, the Marine Corps will need to expand its current training infrastructure and procure additional equipment.

The Commandant approved the FSRG recommendations in late September 2004. Once approved, the FSRG set out to verify the specific programmatic and funding adjustments necessary to bring about these changes. Due to the extent of change, the detail needed for the FY 2006 baseline budget PPBE process was not available. Because the FSRG adjustments are directly related to the Global War on Terror, it was appropriate to include the FY 05 costs in our Supplemental request for expedient congressional review and action. The majority of new units to be stood up under the FSRG will achieve Initial Operating Capability (IOC) in FY 06, with Full Operating Capability (FOC) in FY 07. MILCON and equipment procurement requirements will require funding in FY 05 to support IOC and FOC. As an example, to outfit a standard infantry battalion, it would cost an estimated \$27M (minus theater specific equipment) for equipment such as vehicles, weapons, radios, body armor, NVG's/optics, etc. A number of the critical MOSs to be augmented will take longer to achieve due to the amount of additional training time required to achieve proficiency (i.e., Explosive Ordnance Disposal training takes four years to accomplish). Both active and reserve units will be affected by the planned FSRG changes. The FY 07 and out year costs required to complete and sustain the FSRG recommendations will be addressed during the POM 07 review for inclusion in our baseline budget.

Creating two new infantry battalions and five new light armored reconnaissance companies will afford the Marine Corps additional options when planning for future GWOT deployments, reducing deployment tempo stress on existing units. In particular, the creation of additional critical MOSs will have a significant impact on those Marines currently deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan with military specialties that are required for each Marine deployment/rotation into the AOR.

End Strength. The Marine Corps greatly appreciates the permanent end strength increase to 178,000. We will not back away from our quality recruitment efforts. As you know, the costs of increasing end strength go beyond salary and include barracks, family housing, and medical care. Our first priority for this increase is to enhance the manning of our infantry units to help ease the stress on these heavily committed units. We will also create dedicated foreign military training units and add to our recruiting force, our trainers, and other support for the operating forces in order to reduce the tempo of operations on Marines and their families while addressing the missions we are undertaking in the GWOT.

Unfunded requirements / major equipment shortfalls

Per established guidelines, the Marine Corps' requirement is identified across multiple funding resources (FY 06 Budget, FY 05 Supplemental, FY 06 UPL). The Fiscal Year 2006 budget (\$17.5B) is to sustain normal personnel, operations and maintenance, and investment in the Marine Corps. We originally identified \$9.9B in FY 05 Supplemental requirements, of which \$8.1B was forwarded to the Congress. That amount addresses the incremental costs of war above and beyond the baseline budget, including personnel, operations and maintenance, transportation of equipment in theater, and the initial cost to replace equipment used in prosecuting the Global War on Terrorism. We believe that this process gives Congress greater visibility to funding needed for war prosecution than if it was contained within the baseline budget. Additionally, this process preserves progress towards maintenance and attainment of critical readiness and transformation activities by not diverting baseline budget to fund war expenditures. The costs of war are not entirely predictable and annual supplementals provide greater flexibility to address warfighter needs. The FY 06 Unfunded Programs List requests \$2.9B across appropriations categories. We understand that there are questions as to why funding is requested in one area instead of another, but in combination, these represent our requirement. The Marine Corps acknowledges that Congress will fund requirements as they determine appropriate. We request timely action on the FY 05 Supplemental request to ensure that we can begin contracting for those investment items required by Marine units deploying into the AOR in Fiscal Years 06 and 07. At the current "burn rate", the Marine Corps expects to run out of bridge supplemental funding in May 05.

Reset the force. Fighting the war, and resetting the force for the future, is the Commandant's focus. Marine Corps ground equipment is being used at an accelerated pace in the Global War on Terrorism, leading to more rapid aging of the inventory. While it depends on the individual item of equipment selected, in general, our ground equipment is experiencing roughly eight times the use normally experienced during peacetime operations. The decision to replace, rather than repair, major equipment items is, in most cases, cost-effective due to transportation costs to and from the Central Command's area of responsibility, accelerated aging due to high operational tempo, environmental degradation and the need to keep up-armored vehicles in theater to support future rotations. In this vein, the Marine Corps will rely on future programs to replace existing legacy systems - such as the Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle replacing the current amphibious assault vehicle in use in Iraq and lightweight 155mm howitzer to replace legacy howitzers. Completely resetting the force will require additional investment over several years to accomplish.

The cost to reset the ground and aviation Global War on Terrorism force is \$4.0B and \$1.3B respectively. This is a living number and will be updated continuously.

Conclusion

The Marine Corps' primary concern is protecting our Marines, Sailors and equipment essential to mission accomplishment. We do this by attacking along multiple, complementary axes to provide required capabilities. Leveraging Service and Joint forums, we field equipment and technology that address threats across the detect-collect-interrupt-mitigate force protection continuum. In particular, the evolution of our vehicle hardening efforts coupled with ongoing development in technologies to interrupt insurgents' IED attack cycle continue to save lives and preserve combat power. Wherever possible, we partner with Sister Services to gain synergy in effort and economies of scale while ensuring appropriate stewardship of limited resources.

As we address the challenges of the current fight, we look to exploit the opportunities of the future. Newly formed active and reserve component units will address conventional and irregular threats as existing units retrain to assume additional duties such as civil affairs and SASO. The flexibility borne of these changes enhances the lethality of the Marine Air Ground Task Force and positions the Marine Corps for future operations.

Our requirement is identified across several areas that, taken in combination, portray what resources we need to fight both this war and the next. With your continued support, we will ensure that your Marines are ready. Marines, and of course their families, greatly appreciate the unwavering support of Congress in achieving this end.