

STATEMENT OF
LIEUTENANT GENERAL REX C. McMILLIAN
COMMANDER, MARINE FORCES RESERVE
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
BEFORE
THE SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE
CONCERNING
MARINE CORPS RESERVE
16 MARCH 2016
DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 192

Introduction

The Marine Corps is the Nation's crisis response, expeditionary force in readiness whose global presence provides the Nation a vast range of strategic, operational and tactical options to protect the Nation's interests. For approximately 6 percent of the defense budget, the Marine Corps provides an affordable, capable and responsive insurance policy for the United States of America. The Marine Corps' commitment to the American people is as strong today as ever in its 240 year history. That commitment is backed by a cadre of Active and Reserve Component Marines and Sailors exceptionally experienced in taking the fight directly to the enemy. Our strength is the talent, skill and discipline of our Marines and Sailors. Our Marines have been doing what they have done best since 1775: standing shoulder-to-shoulder to fight and win our Nation's battles. We don't differentiate in our expectations for Marines; whether Reserve or Active Component – all Marines are disciplined, focused, and lethal. Our Marines and Sailors share an expeditionary mindset that shapes Marine Corps culture, ethos, and thinking. We are a Total Force and, as such, the Marine Corps Reserve continues to be integrated in all areas of the Marine Corps. We have been fully engaged across the globe over the past 15 years of combat operations, serving as the essential shock absorber and force enabler for our Active Component. Organized like a traditional Marine Air-Ground Task Force, Marine Reservists from each of our major subordinate commands -- 4th Marine Division, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing, 4th Marine Logistics Group, and Force Headquarters Group -- have made a tremendous impact across the full range of military operations in support of every geographic combatant commander's operational and theater security cooperation requirements, as well as Service commitments.

I am deeply impressed by the professionalism, competence, and dedication of our Reserve Marines. Like their active component brothers and sisters, they serve selflessly to protect our

great Nation. I am inspired by the way they balance family responsibilities, school, and careers – while simultaneously keeping faith with the Marine Corps. They do so with humility, without fanfare, and with a sense of pride and dedication that is consistent with the great sacrifices of Marines from every generation.

Reserve Component units remain highly interoperable with their Active Component Counterparts. Active and Reserve Component Forces are manned, trained and equipped to the same standards, thereby facilitating the seamless employment of Reserve Component Forces to meet Combatant Commander requirements. Accordingly, your Marine Corps Reserve provides a professional, ready, responsive, and relevant Force enabling service level, joint and multilateral operations. We are, and will remain, a key component in the Marine Corps' role as the Nation's crisis response, expeditionary force in readiness.

A Total Force

Over the past year, the Marine Corps Reserve supported each Combatant Commander by providing forces focused on regional security cooperation, crisis response, and crisis prevention activities, as well as support to combat operations. Marine Forces Reserve has maintained a robust operational tempo while providing critical capabilities essential in maintaining lasting national security at the strategic level. Global deployments, along with participation in Service-level, Joint and Multilateral exercises, develop the desired depth of experience of the reserve force, ensuring the Marine Corps Reserve is relevant and ready to meet the Combatant Commanders' need for highly trained, experienced and motivated general-purpose forces. The performance of our Reserve Forces in recent total force operations demonstrates this fact.

In 2015, more than 771 Reserve Marines mobilized supporting operational requirements in five of the six geographic combatant commands. Likewise, nearly 4,500 Reservists participated in

41 exercises supporting requirements in 29 countries across the globe. In 2016, Marine Forces Reserve will continue to support to the combatant commanders by mobilizing an additional 575 Reservists and providing 5,200 Marines for a multitude of theater-specific exercises and security cooperation events. These operations and exercises greatly increase Reserve Component's interoperability with the Active Component, Joint Forces and our allies.

Though the Marine Corps Reserve's opportunity for large-scale mobilizations has decreased in recent years, the demand for the Marine Corps' unique capabilities has increased, from Marine Expeditionary Units to Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Forces. Marine Forces Reserve continues to serve as the shock absorber to lessen the strain of these high demand capabilities on the total force. While our nation emerges from years of major combat operations, the Marine Corps Reserve is not returning to a peacetime posture. We will mobilize and deploy a task-organized Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force to US Southern Command to support the theater security cooperation objectives in that area of operations. Marine Forces Reserve continues to provide daily support to the geographic combatant commanders, in roles that include multi-lateral exercises such as African Lion in Morocco, Ulchi Freedom Guardian in South Korea, Trade Winds in the Caribbean and Maple Flag in Canada. I anticipate Marine Forces Reserve will continue to deploy and integrate with the Active Component, to meet the Combatant Commander high-priority requirements through voluntary and involuntary mobilization authorities.

In addition to participating in operational requirements across the globe, Marine Forces Reserve continues to support the Total Force by dutifully executing the sensitive and crucial mission of providing casualty assistance to the families of our fallen Marines. By virtue of our geographic dispersion, Inspector – Instructor and Reserve Site Support Staffs are well-positioned

to accomplish the vast majority of Marine Corps casualty assistance calls and are trained to provide compassionate and thorough assistance to the families. Indeed, the majority of Marine Corps casualty notifications and follow-on assistance calls to the next of kin conducted are made by our Marines. During Calendar Year 2015, our Inspector – Instructor and Reserve Site Support staffs performed 63 percent of the total casualty calls performed by the Marine Corps. There is no duty to our families that we treat with more importance. This is proven by the professionalism of our Casualty Assistance Calls Officers (CACOs) and the compassionate assistance they provide well beyond the initial notification. We ensure that our CACOs are well trained, equipped, and supported by all levels of command through the combination of in-class and online training. Once assigned, the CACO is the family's central point of contact and serves as a representative or liaison to the funeral home, government agencies, or any other agency that may become involved. They assist family members with planning the return and the final rest of their Marine as well as assist with ensuring the required documents are filed in order to receive the proper benefits. In many cases, our CACOs provide a long-lasting bridge between the Marine Corps and the family while providing support during the grieving process.

Additionally, Marine Forces Reserve units and personnel provide significant support for military funeral honors for our veterans. The Inspector – Instructor and Reserve Site Support staffs, with augmentation from their Reserve Marines, performed 91 percent of all funeral honors rendered by the Marine Corps during Calendar Year 2015. As with casualty assistance, we place enormous emphasis on providing timely, compassionate, and professionally executed military funeral honors.

Finally, Marine Forces Reserve serves as the link between the Marine Corps and local communities. We present the face of the Marine Corps to the American public across the nation.

With Reserve units located across the country, Marine Forces Reserve is uniquely positioned to interact with the public and communicate the Marine Corps story to our fellow citizens – most of whom have little or no contact with the Marine Corps. Last year, for example, Marine Forces Reserve personnel and units conducted over 500 local and regional community relations events across the country.

Predictability

Operationally-focused, the Marine Corps Reserve Marines remain an integral part of the Total Force Marine Corps, whether they are conducting combat operations, serving within a Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force, or assigned as advisors with security cooperation teams in support of steady state requirements. We remain manned, trained, and equipped to seamlessly integrate with and support the Active Component.

However, we recognize the potential effect that the constrained fiscal environment may have on our operational readiness, especially as we consider how to maintain the operational experience of the Reserve Force. By employing a Force Generation Model that rotates Marine Reserve units through a five-year Training and Readiness Plan we ensure units and personnel are ready to meet any challenge. At any given time, the Training and Readiness Plan enables the Reserves to provide combat ready units and detachments in the form of two infantry battalions, an artillery battalion, a combat logistics battalion, multiple aviation capabilities, as well as an assortment of other forces. This results in more than 3,000 Marines and Sailors trained and ready to augment and reinforce Active Component forces whether in support of a contingency response or as part of a pre-planned, budgeted, theater security cooperation mission.

Our Training and Readiness Plan also provides a level of predictability for Force planners as well as our Reserve Marines while maintaining the “train as we fight” philosophy. The Plan

provides our Reservists, their families, and their employers the ability to plan for upcoming duty requirements five years or beyond. This empowers service members to achieve the critical balance between family, civilian career, and service to our Nation while enabling employers to plan for and manage the temporary loss of valued employees.

The key element in the Training and Readiness Plan is the integration of Reserve units, detachments, and individuals into Service, Joint and Multilateral level exercises, building increasing interoperability over the 5-year plan's cycle. The units are assessed in a culminating Integrated Training Exercise during the fourth year of the training cycle to certify their readiness for employment during the fifth year.

The Training and Readiness Plan assures seamless integration with the Active Component in training exercises conducted in the United States and overseas. Additionally, it continues to facilitate the Marine Corps Total Force approach which has been successful throughout combat operations.

Personnel

Marines, Sailors and civilians are the foundation of all that we do. The resources we dedicate to sustaining and developing this foundation directly contributes to the success of our institution. Our ability to recruit and retain high quality men and women is linked to our ability to meet the Marine Corps' force-in-readiness requirements. Marine Forces Reserve is committed to recruiting and retaining the highest quality people who meet prescribed mental and physical standards, and are ready in mind, body and spirit to execute their duties in the defense of our Nation.

The vast majority of the Marine Corps Selected Reserve's authorized end strength of 38,900 fall under Marine Forces Reserve. The Selected Reserve is composed of Marines in four

categories: Marines in Selected Marine Corps Reserve Units, Active Reserve, Individual Mobilization Augmentees, and service members in initial training. By fiscal year 2017, the Selected Reserve authorized end strength will decrease to 38,500 Marines. This force reduction is occurring without any loss of reserve capabilities through the voluntary release of Marines that no longer meet the military occupational specialty (MOS) requirement for their unit due to the force structure changes implemented in 2012 and 2013. Each of these Marines is also being offered an opportunity to retrain to a new MOS available at their current location.

In addition to Selected Reserve Marines, Marine Forces Reserve administers approximately 70,000 Marines who serve in the Individual Ready Reserve, which is projected to continue to increase due to the Active Component end strength draw down. Marine Forces Reserve continues to monitor the mobilization viability of these Marines who have fulfilled their active service commitment, and have returned to civilian life. The mobilization potential of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) is monitored through the use of muster events, which are conducted at multiple locations across the country. The muster event is the Marine Corps' opportunity to physically inspect these Marines to ensure they meet the requirements for mobilization. These events also provide Marines the opportunity to address administrative issues, complete mental health and post-deployment screening, review Reserve obligations and opportunities, meet with military-friendly employers and prior service recruiters, and reconnect with fellow Marines. During fiscal year 2015, Marine Forces Reserve held 27 Muster events with 7,937 Individual Ready Reserve Marines in attendance.

As the Marine Corps continues to draw down Active Component end strength, the option of continued service in the Reserve Component has become increasingly appealing to young Marines leaving active duty. Marines approaching the end of their current contracts, whether Active or

Reserve Component, receive counseling on the tangible and intangible benefits of remaining associated with the Selected Reserve. We educate each transitioning Active Component Marine on opportunities for continued service in the Marine Corps Reserve through the Marine Corps' transition assistance and educational outreach programs.

Marine Forces Reserve enjoys high retention rates and affiliation demand enhanced through incentive programs such as – retraining, inactive duty travel reimbursement, and bonus payments. These programs are crucial to ensure we are able to meet our authorized end strength while also retaining our most talented Marines. Over the past two years, your support for these critical programs have helped to bolster our overall personnel end-strength to 99 percent of the total requirement with a grade and MOS match rate of 84 percent. The unprecedented retention rates over the last two years not only are reflective of the health of the Force, but directly contribute to its operational readiness. While we fully expect to meet our Selected Marine Corps Reserve retention and recruiting goals again this fiscal year, continued use of incentive programs are critical to optimally align our inventory against our requirements, maintain individual and unit-level readiness, address significant shortfalls in staff non-commissioned officer leadership, maximize Marine deployability, and fully rebuild readiness from previous force structure changes. Your continued support for bonuses and other initiatives that promote service to this great Nation will ensure our ability to recruit and retain the very best service members.

Equipment

Marine Forces Reserve is manned, trained, and equipped to maintain operational parity with the Active Component. While complete compatibility is difficult to achieve due to total force priorities, equipment compatibility between the Active Component and Reserve Component is closer today than it has ever been - due largely to sustaining requirements over 15 years of

continuous operational deployments. This level of compatibility with the Active Component comes at an increase in equipment maintenance cost due to the introduction of non-standard equipment, the fielding of new systems, and the overall increase in equipment scale and complexity.

Marine Forces Reserve equipment readiness levels are healthy and capable of supporting all home station training requirements and our current operational deployments. Our efforts currently focus on Global Combat Support System-Marine Corps post cutover actions, training our supply personnel and maintainers on the new system, adjusting equipment inventories to the recently approved Training Allowances, and maintaining our equipment in a fully operational status. Continued Congressional support in fully funding our Operations and Maintenance, Marine Corps Reserve maintenance budget request is paramount for our continued success.

The top procurement priority of Marine Forces Reserve is the KC-130J Super Hercules. The Active Component has fully fielded the KC-130J; however, the remaining 23 Reserve Component aircraft are not expected to be fully fielded until 2027 at the current rate. This extended timeline forces the Reserve Component to simultaneously operate KC-130J and legacy KC-130T aircraft for a prolonged period of time. The two aircraft models have vastly different logistic, maintenance and aircrew requirements, demanding double the investment of resources by Reserve squadrons.

Our second highest procurement priority is the RQ-21A Blackjack Small Tactical Unmanned Aircraft System. The RQ-21A will provide the Marine Expeditionary Force and subordinate commands (divisions and regiments) a dedicated intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance system capable of delivering intelligence products directly to the tactical commander in real time. This program is still in low-rate initial production - the Active

Component began initial procurement in fiscal year 2014, and the Reserve Component is scheduled to receive the first RQ-21As in fiscal year 2021 and keep Marine Forces Reserve at parity with the Active Component.

Training

During June 2016, Marine Forces Reserve will conduct its fourth Service-level Integrated Training Exercise, which is a two Battalion assessed live-fire and maneuver exercise, featuring reserve component forces comprising the Marine Air-Ground Task Force elements (i.e., command, ground, air, and logistics). The unique nature of this exercise ensures maximum training benefits for the ground, aviation, and logistics combat elements under the command of a regimental headquarters. The Integrated Training Exercise is an indispensable component of our Training and Readiness Plan and serves as an annual capstone exercise, which is the principal mechanism for examining our training and readiness levels, as well as assessing our operational capabilities. Conducted aboard Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center, Twenty-nine Palms, California; the Integrated Training Exercise is a Marine Air-Ground Task Force deployment vice a compilation of numerous annual training events. Units participate based on future activation potential in accordance to the Marine Forces Reserve Fiscal Years 2016-2020 Training and Readiness Plan. The Integrated Training Exercise provides all Marine Air-Ground Task Force elements an opportunity to undergo a Service-Level assessment of core competencies that are essential to Expeditionary Forward-Deployed Operations. Additionally, individuals serving on the regimental command element staff receive training that ensures the ability to augment a Marine Air-Ground Task Force and/or a Joint staff. In summary, the Integrated Training Exercise improves combat readiness, efficiency in Total Force integration, and enables more rapid activation response times at the battalion and squadron level.

At our Reserve Training Centers, we continue to maximize training efficiencies by utilizing simulators wherever possible to preserve fiscal and materiel resources. The Reserve Component Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainers (ISMTs) and other simulation systems safeguard consistent capabilities across the Total Force by ensuring Reserve Marines are trained to the same tasks, conditions, and standards as the Active Component. The ISMTs particularly benefit remote site locations that are distant from Department of Defense training ranges by preserving valuable training time during drill weekends.

With our Marines deploying around the globe, we also access and leverage a variety of other sources for language and cultural training, such as the Marine Corps' Center for Advanced Operational Culture and Language, the Defense Language Institute, and Regional Language Centers. These enhanced language and culture learning opportunities strengthens core competencies and posture Marine Forces Reserve as a ready and responsive force.

Facilities

Marine Forces Reserve occupies facilities in 47 states, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. These facilities include 26-owned and 134-tenant Reserve Training Centers, three family housing sites, three Bachelor Enlisted Quarters, and a General Officer's Quarters in New Orleans, Louisiana. Although some Reserve Training Centers are located on major Department of Defense bases and National Guard readiness centers, most of our centers are located within civilian communities. Therefore, the condition and appearance of our facilities influences the American people's perception of the Marine Corps throughout the nation.

The largest part of the facilities' budget sustains the existing physical plant, focusing on infrastructure maintenance that enables Marine Forces Reserve to meet Service and combatant command operational requirements. Costs of maintaining the physical plant steadily increases

based on the age of the buildings. We have improved the overall readiness and physical security of our inventory and corrected some chronic facility condition deficiencies through Facilities Sustainment, Restoration, and Modernization (FSRM) funding, particularly with a focused and successful effort to improve security by standardizing gates and electronic access systems for all Marine Forces Reserve owned sites. Engineering assessments at all our Marine Forces Reserve sites are currently underway to identify all anti-terrorism and force protection vulnerabilities for FSRM project appropriation.

The Marine Corps' Military Construction, Naval Reserve (MCNR) program focuses on new footprint and recapitalization of our aging facilities. The construction provided by the annual authorization of MCNR funding has been an important factor in moving Marine Forces Reserve forward in its facilities support mission. The combined effects from our targeted consolidation, FSRM and MCNR programs have steadily reduced the number of inadequate or substandard Reserve Training Centers. Continued annual funding for our facilities program will enable Marine Forces Reserve to improve the physical infrastructure that supports, protects, and reinforces mission readiness of our units. Additionally, Marine Forces Reserve continues targeting opportunities to place training facilities within existing Department of Defense compounds. For example, in 2015 an aging and exposed Memphis Tennessee site was replaced with a new on-site facility at Naval Support Activity Mid-South (Millington, Tennessee).

In an attempt to lessen some of the burden on the energy budget, and in accordance with national mandates, Marine Forces Reserve completed energy assessments at our owned sites and continues to implement the recommendations from those assessments as funds are available. Priority is given to sites that are the biggest energy users nationally and those projects which offer the best return on investment. Environmental stewardship continues to be a major success in

ensuring Marine Forces Reserve sites and units continue to comply with national, state, and local laws.

Health Services and Behavioral Health

Our focus on Marines, Sailors, and their families remains our highest priority. Therefore, we are keenly attentive to maintaining their health and total fitness. During dwell, our health services priority is to attain and maintain the Department of Defense goal of 75 percent fully medically ready. In Fiscal Year 2015, Marine Forces Reserve individual medical and dental readiness Department of Defense rates were 70 percent and 89 percent respectively. We aggressively work towards improving medical readiness through effective utilization of Medical Readiness Reporting System capabilities. This enables accurate monitoring and identification of unit-level actions necessary to attain readiness goals. The opening of a Navy Satellite branch clinic at Marine Corps Support Facility, New Orleans is an example of the commitment to improve individual medical/dental readiness. Other supporting efforts focus on advocating for funds and tailoring support for various Reserve Medical/Dental Health Readiness Programs. This includes utilizing a combination of programs, such as; our Reserve Health Readiness Program contract services, Post-Deployment Health Reassessment, Reserve TRICARE Medical/Dental Programs, and the Psychological Health Outreach Program, to significantly aid in sustaining our total readiness. Additionally, our Health Services personnel participate in Force Readiness Assistance & Assessment Program unit inspections. These inspections provide oversight for the current health status of the Force at unit levels and provide an ability to monitor compliance requirements, policy adherence, and meeting unit goal initiatives.

The Reserve Health Readiness Program (RHRP) is the cornerstone for individual medical and dental readiness. Marine Forces Reserve has benefited from increases in overall readiness as

a result of this program. This program funds contracted medical and dental specialists to provide services to units that do not have direct medical or dental support personnel assigned and are not supported by a military treatment facility. During Fiscal Year 2015, the RHRP performed 23,594 Periodic Health Assessments, 2,400 Mental Health Assessments, 1,506 immunizations, 7,205 laboratory services, 43,785 audio services, and 42,992 Dental Procedures. TRICARE also offers, for voluntary purchase, TRICARE Reserve Select for medical coverage and TRICARE Dental Program to our Reserve Marines, Sailors, and their families.

In addition to RHRP, the Marine Corps' robust behavioral health program addresses issues ranging from substance abuse prevention, suicide prevention, operational stress management, domestic violence, and child abuse prevention. These programs work in conjunction with Navy Medicine programs to address behavioral health issues.

With regard to specific fitness efforts, Marine Forces Reserve continues to conduct Operational Stress Control and Readiness training at all levels. This training is designed to be provided during pre-deployment training to service members of units that are deploying for more than 90 days as well as all commands in garrison. The purpose of this training is to provide the requisite knowledge, skills, and tools to assist commanders in preventing, identifying, and managing combat and operational stress concerns as early as possible.

Navy Bureau of Medicine continues to support behavioral health through various independent contracted programs, such as the Post-Deployment Health Reassessment/Mental Health Assessments and the Psychological Health Outreach Program. The Post-Deployment Health Reassessment places an emphasis on identifying mental health concerns that may have emerged since returning from deployment. The Psychological Health Outreach Program addresses post-deployment behavioral health concerns and crisis-related interventions through

social worker contractors. These social workers provide an array of referral services in the community to include follow-up with service members. These programs have proven effective in the overall management of identifying Marines and Sailors in need of behavioral health assistance and have provided an avenue to those service members who seek behavioral health assistance.

Signs of operational and combat stress can manifest long after a service member returns home from deployment. Delayed onset of symptoms presents particular challenges to Reservists who can be isolated from vital medical care and the daily support network inherent in Marine Reserve units. Encouraging Marines to acknowledge and vocalize mental health issues is a ubiquitous challenge facing our commanders. We address the stigma associated with mental health care through key programs such as the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program. Further, we market all our behavioral health initiatives and programs through our Marine Forces Reserve portal website and during key Marine Corps forums throughout the year. Your continued support of these programs is greatly appreciated.

Suicide prevention continues to remain a priority effort for Marine Forces Reserve and we will continue to leverage all of the resources needed to address this heartbreaking issue. Marine Forces Reserve focuses its suicide prevention efforts on five initiatives: In-theater Assessments, Post Deployment Health Assessments, Psychological Health Outreach Program, Care Management Teams, and Unit Marine Awareness and Prevention Integration Training. The In-theater Assessment targets Reservists exhibiting or struggling with clinically significant issues, and ensures evaluation by competent medical authorities for post-deployment treatment with follow-up decisions made prior to the return home. The Post Deployment Health Reassessment seeks to identify issues that emerge once Reservists have come home from deployment. Identified issues are immediately evaluated and referred for treatment by the clinician interviewer, to include

referral recommendations based on available local resources, such as the VA or private mental health providers. The Psychological Health Outreach Program is an essential program for treatment referral and follow-up to ensure our service members are receiving the appropriate behavioral health services. Through the Care Management Teams, the VA assigns a primary care manager who is responsible for referral and follow-up to any Reservist who has a health care issue.

Any Reservist and their family can access Marine Corps installations' behavioral health programs through Marine Corps Community Services programming while they are on any type of active-duty orders. When not on active-duty orders, Military OneSource provides counseling, resources, and support to Reserve service members and their families anywhere in the world. The Marine Corps' DSTRESS Line provides phone, chat and Skype support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year and is also available to all Reserve Marines, Sailors, and family members regardless of their activation status.

Sexual Assault Prevention & Response

Eliminating sexual assault throughout Marine Forces Reserve remains a top priority. Efforts toward this goal have gained increasing momentum with a full-time civilian staff of six. Each Major Subordinate Command (MSC) within Marine Forces Reserve has a Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) who manages that Commanding General's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program from the headquarters office. Together with the Civilian Victim Advocate and the Force level Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, Marine Forces Reserve continues to increase victim services, improve victim response capabilities, and emphasize prevention.

In addition to managing the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program at all Marine Forces Reserve sites throughout the United States, the SARCs train more than one

hundred new Uniformed Victim Advocates (UVA) each year and provide continuous support to more than 300 Marines and Sailors serving in the collateral duty billet as a UVA at any given time. Once trained by the SARCs and credentialed through the DoD Sexual Assault Advocate Certification Program, the UVAs are appointed by their commanders to be Advocates at their respective Reserve Training Centers. They are then charged with responding to those service members or adult dependents that make a report of sexual assault regardless of their activation status. With the support of their SARC, the UVAs assess for safety issues, offer ongoing supportive services, and maintain a data base of resources for victims of sexual assault who may not reside on or near an Installation. The SARCs coordinate with leadership to ensure that every Marine Forces Reserve site is covered and services are available no matter their location. The SARCs and UVAs collaborate with providers local to the sites in order to create a network of support and response capabilities for the Reserve component across the country.

Our prevention strategy is holistic and has therefore coordinated with other programs that can support the prevention effort such as the Equal Opportunity Program, Family Readiness, and Behavioral Health. Marine Forces Reserve also emphasizes setting the example of discipline and respect from all levels of command by encouraging a positive command climate within each unit. I, along with the four commanding generals of our major subordinate commands, actively engage with our Marines and Sailors as we travel to the Reserve sites to learn what we as leaders may do to further support a positive environment that is free from attitudes and behaviors that are incompatible with our core values. Preventative education also continues to play a role as all non-commissioned officers receive “Take a Stand” bystander intervention training and all junior Marines participate in the “Step Up” bystander intervention training each year. All of our Marines participate in the Pure Praxis Bystander Intervention Training.

Marine Forces Reserve is committed to the fight against sexual assault while continuing to provide supportive services and advocacy to those who need it.

Quality of Life

Whether we are taking care of our Marines in the desert or families back home, quality of life support programs are designed to help all Marines and their families. Because Marines and their families make great sacrifices in service to our country, they deserve the very best support. Our Marines and families are dispersed throughout America, away from the traditional support systems of our bases and stations. Therefore, we expend great effort to ensure awareness of the numerous support programs adapted for their benefit. Family Readiness Officers are a critical component to ensuring young Marines and their families receive the help needed to ensure they can continue to serve this great Nation.

This year we have worked as the advocate for the Reservist to ensure they are included in tri-service-level discussions with DoD and the VA to ensure service treatment records reach VA with a clear of chain custody. Because every Marine leaving active duty with a remaining military service obligation transitions to the IRR, and every Marine mobilized over 30 days must have his or her medical history documented, Marine Forces Reserve has a large stake in ensuring this process is sound and that follow-up medical care is assured.

Following approximately eight years of program expansion to achieve wartime footing, Marine and Family Readiness Programs are being adjusted to meet current and future needs to operating forces, Marines including Reservists, and their families. The Marine Corps is assessing all Marine and Family programs to ensure that they are stabilized, focused on core requirements, and providing support in critical areas such as deployment. Our result is a ready and resilient Force, well equipped to achieve success.

Our Marine Corps Family Team Building (MCFTB) programs provide relevant and standardized training to unit commanders, Family Readiness Command Teams, Marines and their families; thereby reinforcing the pillars of resiliency, sustaining a constant state of personal and family readiness, and ultimately enhancing unit mission readiness. MCFTB training events are delivered in person and through interactive webinars at Marine Corps units across the United States.

A key component to our quality of life and resiliency is the religious ministry support provided by the 190 Chaplains and Religious Program Specialists serving in our ranks; 107 of them in commissioned Reserve units, while 83 support the active component. Of those, 29 are mobilized in support of Combatant Commander's across the globe. This support includes provision of divine services across the spectrum of faith communities, critical advisement on spiritual and ethical matters at every level of the chain of command and pastoral care to all in a safe, confidential environment. One signature program is the Chaplain Religious Enrichment Development Operations (CREDO) Program. MFR CREDO provides two transformational programs: the Marriage Enrichment Retreat (MER) and the Personal Resiliency Retreat (PRR). CREDO contributes to a ready and resilient Force by equipping Marines, Sailors, and their families with practical relationship and communication tools that strengthen marriages and individual resilience on the home front and during deployments. The PRR curriculum also helps Marines and Sailors set personal goals, make good decisions, deal with stress, and live lives with greater purpose and satisfaction. Learning to live with purpose helps guard against a loss of hope and counteracts suicidal and other destructive behaviors. In FY 15, 10 Marriage Enrichment retreats were conducted with 232 participants. Two Personal Resiliency Retreats were conducted with 20 participants. In FY 16, 14 Marriage Enrichment Retreats and 4 Personal Resiliency

Retreats are projected to be offered.

The Marine Corps Personal and Professional Development programs continue to provide educational information to service members and their families. Reservists take advantage of our partnership with tutor.com, which offers access for our Marines, Sailors, and their families to 24/7 no-cost, live online tutoring services for K-12 students, Reserve component college students, and adult learners through the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Yellow Ribbon Program. Additionally, the Marine Corps' partnership with the OSD-supported Peterson's Online Academic Skills Course helps Marines build math and verbal skills to excel on the job, pass an exam, advance in a career, or continue education. This program assesses the current level of reading comprehension, vocabulary, and math skills and teaches the concepts and skills needed to increase proficiency in each of these academic areas. This course is accessed through the Military One Source or Navy Knowledge Online and provided at no charge for service members and their families.

Our Semper Fit program remains fully engaged in partnering with our bases and stations to provide quality, results-based education and conditioning protocols for our Marines and Sailors. The High Intensity Tactical Training (HITT) program includes hands-on strength and conditioning courses, online physical fitness tools, mobile applications for service members to access anywhere at any time, recorded webinars, as well as instruction on injury prevention, nutrition, and weight management. Our Marines' and Sailors' quality of life is also increased through various stress management and *esprit de corps* activities, such as unit outings and participation in competitive events. These programs are key to unit cohesion, camaraderie, and motivation.

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP) has been incorporated into the

Marine Corps Unit, Personal, and Family Readiness Program at every command level with civilian and Active Duty Deputy Family Readiness Officers (FRO). Since its inception in 2010, the YRRP has held more than 660 training events for more than 35,000 Marines, Sailors, and family members. The responsibility of executing Yellow Ribbon - in accordance with the legislation and Marine Forces Reserve policy, resides with the individual unit commander. This ensures commanders remain engaged with the challenges and issues facing their Marines, Sailors, and families, and is in line with Force Preservation efforts.

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program is enduring. Marine Forces Reserve continues to explore, with our Marine Corps Family Team Building staff, innovative methods for program delivery that will be sustainable in any fiscal or deployment climate. This includes developing webinars, mail-outs, personal deployment briefs designed to meet the individual needs of the service member and family, and working with the Family Readiness Officers to leverage local resources at no cost to the government.

We continue to be supportive of Military OneSource, which provides our Marines, Sailors, and their families with an around-the-clock information and referral service via toll-free telephone and internet access for counseling and on subjects such as parenting, child care, education, finances, legal issues, deployment, crisis support, and relocation.

Our Marines, Sailors, and their families, who sacrifice so much for our Nation's defense, should not be asked to sacrifice quality of life. We will continue to be a faithful advocate for these programs and services and to evolve and adapt to the changing needs and environments in order to ensure that quality support programs and services are provided to our Marines, Sailors and their families. The combined effect of these programs is critical to the readiness and retention of our Marines, Sailors, and their families, and your continued support of these

programs is greatly appreciated.

Supporting our Wounded, Ill, or Injured Marines and their Families

Marine Forces Reserve's commitment to our wounded Marines, Sailors, and their families is unwavering. Through the Wounded Warrior Regiment (WWR), the Marine Corps ensures one standard of care for all wounded, ill, or injured (WII) service members, whether they are active or reserve. Marine Forces Reserve requested and received in 2013 a liaison in who coordinates with WWR to provide subject matter expertise and facilitate support for the unique challenges faced by Marine Reservists and their families.

WWR staff includes the Reserve Medical Entitlements Determinations Section, which specifically maintains oversight of all cases of reservists who require medical care for service incurred and duty limiting medical conditions. Reservists facing complex care and recovery needs have access to WWR's network of 44 Recovery Care Coordinators (RCCs) who provide one-on-one transition support and resource identification for WII reservists and families often living away from military installations. WWR also has medical advocates at the regimental staff who are available to assist reservists in need of medical care coordination and advocacy.

Marine Forces Reserve is intimately involved in the support provided to wounded, ill, and injured Marines through the mobilization of Reserve Marines who serve as District Injured Support Coordinators (DISCs), Section Leaders and recovery care support staff. The geographically dispersed DISCs focus primarily on reaching out to the reserve and veteran WII population to ensure the Marine Corps' commitment to keep faith is upheld.

While the current operations are resulting in fewer combat casualties, Marines afflicted with non-combat injuries and illnesses will likely remain a concern. In addition, instances of post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injury continue to arise due to delayed onset as well

as the tendency by Marines to postpone seeking help. Regardless of the global security environment, recovery care support must be enduring. Marine Forces Reserve will not forget the sacrifices our Marines and Sailors have made for this great Nation; and we will continue to work with WWR to establish resources and programs that address the unique and ongoing needs of our reserve population.

Conclusion

The Marine Corps is our Nation's crisis response force and will continue to be most ready when our Nation is least ready. As part of the Marine Corps Total Force, Marine Forces Reserve must remain manned, trained, and equipped to provide forces to the Active Component to respond across the operational spectrum -- from disaster relief, to embassy evacuation, to full-scale combat operations. We live in a world challenged by competition for natural resources, violent extremism, natural disasters, social unrest, cyber-attacks, regional conflict, and the proliferation of advanced weaponry and weapons of mass destruction. The future operating environment will continue to be characterized by challenges that will stretch the employment capacity of the U.S. military and demand a force-in-readiness with global response capabilities. With your continued unwavering support, Marine Forces Reserve will remain that crucial shock absorber to the Active Component. Semper Fidelis!