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STATUS OF THE U.S. ARMY AND U.S. MARINE CORPS IN FIGHTING THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

JUNE 30, 2005

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STATUS OF THE U.S. ARMY AND U.S. MARINE CORPS IN FIGHTING THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

THURSDAY, JUNE 30, 2005

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:36 a.m. in room SD–325, Russell Senate Office Building, Senator John Warner (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Warner, McCain, Inhofe, Roberts, Collins, Talent, Graham, Dole, Thune, Levin, Kennedy, Reed, Akaka, and Bayh.

Committee staff members present: Judith A. Ansley, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Ambrose R. Hock, professional staff member; Gregory T. Kiley, professional staff member; Sandra E. Luff, professional staff member; Elaine A. McCusker, professional staff member; David M. Morriss, counsel; Stanley R. O'Connor, Jr., professional staff member; Joseph T. Sixeas, professional staff member; Scott W. Stucky, general counsel; and Diana G. Tabler, professional staff member.

Minority staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, Democratic staff director; Daniel J. Cox, Jr., professional staff member; Bridget W. Higgins, research assistant; and Gerald J. Leeling, minority counsel.

Staff assistants present: Andrew W. Florell, Benjamin L. Rubin, and Nicholas W. West.

Committee members' assistants present: Christopher J. Paul, assistant to Senator McCain; John A. Bonsell, assistant to Senator Inhofe; Chris Arnold, assistant to Senator Roberts; Mackenzie M. Eaglen, assistant to Senator Collins; Lindsey R. Neas, assistant to Senator Talent; Meredith Moseley, assistant to Senator Graham; Bob Taylor, assistant to Senator Thune; Mieke Y. Eoyang, assistant to Senator Kennedy; Frederick M. Downey, assistant to Senator Lieberman; Elizabeth King, assistant to Senator Reed; Darcie Tokioka, assistant to Senator Akaka; William K. Sutey, assistant to Senator Bill Nelson; Todd Rosenblum, assistant to Senator Bayh; and Andrew Shapiro, assistant to Senator Clinton.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN WARNER, CHAIRMAN

Chairman WARNER. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. The committee meets this morning to receive testimony on the current status of our ground forces in fighting the global war on terrorism the world over. The committee welcomes our distinguished panel of witnesses: General Richard Myers, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Dr. David Chu, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness; General Peter Schoomaker, Chief of Staff of the United States Army; General Mike Hagee, the Commandant of the Marine Corps; and our distinguished former colleague, Charles Abell, Dr. Chu's Principal Deputy and a valued and respected member of our team over here.

I am going to put my statement into the record such that we can have the maximum time for the benefit of our witnesses. We all note the past 3½ years have been a time of great success and enormous challenge for the United States Armed Forces. The Armed Forces of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, Active and Reserve components, have performed magnificently in the months following the attacks of September 11, 2001.

The Constitution says that the Congress of the United States shall raise and maintain our Armed Forces. We are here today to get your report on their status and what we in Congress can do to help our President and Secretary of Defense, the Chairman, and others to maintain this extraordinary force which has served America so well.

[The prepared statement of Senator Warner follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR JOHN WARNER

The committee meets this morning to receive testimony on the current status of U.S. Ground Forces in fighting the global war on terrorism.

I welcome our distinguished panel of witnesses: General Richard B. Myers, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Dr. David S.C. Chu, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness; General Peter J. Schoomaker, the Chief of Staff of the United States Army; General Michael W. Hagee, the Commandant of the Marine Corps; and Charles S. Abell, Dr. Chu's Principal Deputy, and a valued former colleague on the staff of this committee. I thank you all for your service and for your appearance today.

The past 3½ years have been a time of great successes and enormous challenges for the U.S. Armed Forces. The U.S. Armed Forces—Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Active and Reserve components—have performed magnificently in the months following the attacks of September 11, 2001. The mission of our men and women in uniform to defend the Nation has never been executed with better skill or dedication. The rapid military successes of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom have evolved into the hard work of reconstruction and stability operations necessary to ensure peace and security in these troubled regions. Such important work brings new challenges, including the extraordinarily high operational tempo on people and equipment, the technological challenges of countering asymmetric threats such as improvised explosive devices, the demands of transforming the Armed Forces for future threats, and the responsibility of the Nation to properly care for those who volunteer to serve Active, Reserve, National Guard, and retired—and their families. Since September 11, our Nation has been at war, and the men and women of the Armed Forces and their families have been equal to the task.

Even with these successes, however, we must be mindful of the impact these ongoing operations are having on our forces. That is our focus today, the status of our ground forces—the Army and Marine Corps—both Active and Reserve components. Since the fall of 2003, the Army has maintained over 120,000 troops in Iraq, and approximately 18,000 soldiers in Afghanistan. The Marine Corps has maintained about 20,000 marines in Iraq since early 2004 and has also contributed significant

forces to Afghanistan. Maintaining these force levels has required the rotation of hundreds of thousands of soldiers and marines, in and out of these theaters. The Services, as "force providers," have ensured that the Commander of U.S. Central Command, General Abizaid, has the ground forces he requires.

Such a high operational tempo raises issues and concerns that must be understood and addressed. The first of these concerns is recruiting. We are concerned about recent reports regarding the challenges faced in military recruiting. On June 10, the Office of the Secretary of Defense released monthly recruiting data showing that the Army, the Army Reserve, the Marine Corps Reserve, and the Army National Guard had fallen short in achieving their May 2005 recruiting goals. This is not the first such report on problems with recruiting. I ask our witnesses to address the impact of recruiting shortfalls on the Active and Reserve components of the Army and Marine Corps and how those shortages may affect your ability to meet combatant commanders' requirements.

A second issue is retention. The Services have done a great job of retaining experienced officers and noncommissioned officers, but there are warning signs. In the Army Reserve, for example, there are significant shortfalls in first term reenlistments and higher than expected requests for retirement. There is no question that the stress of frequent deployments and family separations, as well as the improving economy, are having an effect on the willingness of trained and experienced individuals to continue to serve. We look forward to your assessment of the current situation and any recommendations you may have for legislative assistance to help you in meeting your manpower requirements.

Every battlefield commander has two critical priorities—accomplishing the mission and protecting the force. Providing the best force protection to all deployed forces, including personal body armor, adequate numbers and types of armored vehicles, and the deployment and acquisition of countermeasures for improvised explosive devices has been a formidable challenge. The committee has been, and remains, committed to ensuring that the Department receives whatever authorities and resources the Services and the combatant commanders need to protect our deployed forces. I look forward to updates from our witnesses today on the status of these efforts, and what more needs to be done.

It is the solemn duty of this committee to fulfill its Constitutional responsibilities to "raise and maintain" this magnificent force. We will continue to do just that. I thank our witnesses for helping the committee to understand the challenges we face in sustaining and improving our magnificent fighting forces.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Levin.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN

Senator LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this very important hearing focused on the status of the Army and Marine Corps in fighting the global war on terrorism. I join you in welcoming our witnesses. Both of us and a number of our colleagues have had a chance to shake the hands and thank some of the extraordinary men and women who are with us today and who have represented us so bravely and nobly around the world. There will be more of that, I am sure, later.

We are truly proud of our men and women in uniform. They are performing superbly in very difficult and dangerous conditions. I hope that our witnesses today will be able to assure us that everything possible is being done to give those men and women everything that is needed to succeed in fighting our Nation's battles.

One of the concerns that we all have is the impact of the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan on the future of our All-Volunteer Force. The All-Volunteer Force depends on volunteers, and the statistics show that the number of volunteers is dwindling. The Army in particular is in trouble. Through the end of May, the Active-Duty Army is 8,300 enlistments below its goal. That is about a 20-percent shortfall. The Army Reserve is about 2,400 below its goal. That is about a 20-percent shortfall. The Army National Guard is

about 9,800 soldiers below its goal and that is almost a 25-percent shortfall.

Although the Marine Corps is on track to meet its recruiting goal for the year, it too is facing challenges and, as General Hagee will say in his opening statement, fiscal year 2005 is proving to be the most difficult recruiting year that we have had in 10 years. The recruiting marketplace will become even more challenging in fiscal year 2006.

The Services are meeting or exceeding overall retention goals. However, this too can change if our military personnel become exhausted by repeated combat tours. Some are already on their second and third tours in Iraq. If our career professionals decide that they have had enough, their departure has the real potential of breaking our force.

The only way that we have been able to meet our troop requirements in Iraq and Afghanistan is by mobilizing the overextended National Guard and Reserves. This has been done at a great cost to them, their families, and our communities. Governors are concerned about whether they will have National Guard personnel and equipment to respond to natural disasters. We continue to hear from employers about the adverse impact on small businesses and self-employed National Guard and Reserve members.

Finally, some are wondering if the National Guard and Reserves will be ready the next time they are needed. In a memorandum to the Army Chief of Staff, the Chief of the Army Reserves said that "The Army Reserve is additionally in grave danger of being unable to meet their other operational requirements, including those in named op plans and continental United States (CONUS) emergencies, and is rapidly degenerating into a broken force."

The Chief of the National Guard Bureau recently stated that "My concern is that the National Guard will not be a ready force the next time it is needed, whether here at home or abroad."

Our overreliance on the Guard and Reserve may have severely impacted them as effective military units. Because we have virtually exhausted our supply of ground forces, they will not be readily available if needed for yet another operation. In the assessment of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the shortage of ground forces will result in taking longer to succeed in another conflict, such as any possible conflict in North Korea or Iran.

Mr. Chairman, the balance of my statement has to do with the equipment issues and some of the other issues involving personnel, and I would ask that the full statement be incorporated in the record at this time.

Chairman WARNER. Without objection.

Senator LEVIN. I thank the chair.

[The prepared statement of Senator Levin follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR CARL LEVIN

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this very important hearing focused on the status of the Army and Marine Corps in fighting the global war on terrorism. I join you in welcoming our witnesses this morning.

The American public is truly proud of our men and women in uniform You should be very proud of yourselves and your service to your Nation. You are performing superbly in very difficult and dangerous conditions.

Many people are concerned that there are not enough of you for the missions we expect you to accomplish, that you have not been equipped with the best protective

gear available, and that in some cases, you have not been properly trained for the missions. Today, I hope that our witnesses will be able to assure us that we are doing everything possible to give you what you need to succeed in fighting our Nation's battles.

While our soldiers and marines have performed magnificently in this war, and while in general our equipment has performed nearly as well, we were not as prepared in that regard as we should have been. Shortages in required equipment were apparent before we invaded Iraq and have been even more apparent during the violent aftermath for which there had been inadequate planning. For example, early in 2003 the Marine Corps did not have the brigade and below battle command systems that the Army had which provide situational awareness. Consequently, there was an urgent, last minute program launched to provide marines with the "Blue Force Tracker" system just prior to the kick off of the Iraq invasion so that Joint Force Commanders could track Marine Corps units like they could the Army units attacking on the Marine flank. Had this not been a planned invasion and rather an unanticipated combat mission, then the Marines would have gone to war without that capability.

We went into the war with equipment shortages and, even after pouring billions into supplemental appropriations, are still suffering from those shortages. We are all well aware of the shortages of individual and wheeled vehicle armor, of aviation survivability equipment, of radios and machine guns for support units in both the Army and the Marine Corps. Now, the Marine Corps Inspector General has identified even more shortages among Marine Corps units deployed in Iraq.

Our soldiers and marines, the civilian workers at our depots and arsenals, and our defense contractors have labored long and hard to put some degree of armor on over 40,000 wheeled vehicles over the last 2 years. They are to be commended for their work. However, it has not been without mistakes and unacceptable delays—many related to the fragmented nature of the ever-growing requests that emanate from Iraq and Afghanistan. For instance, the Army requirement for factory installed up-armored HMMWVs increased over time from 247 to over 10,000, and for add-on armor for HMMWVs to over 15,000. Until recently, the Marine Corps has been reporting a requirement for an additional 498 up-armored HMMWVs and a total of 5,500 add-on armor kits for HMMWVs. Now the Marine commander in Iraq has requested that all of his HMMWVs with add-on-armor be upgraded to the factory installed up-armored version—a total of over 2,200 more.

We, in Congress, are committed to providing our troops all of the funding necessary, both for force protection, and for prosecuting the war, but the administration continues to refuse to request the needed supplemental appropriations on a timely basis. We, in Congress, seek to address the Services' war related and overall defense requirements in a comprehensive and coherent way, but the administration's lack of action hinders our ability to do so. The Services know what they need for recapitalization of equipment and for equipment shortages, and have a good estimate of personnel and operations and maintenance costs for the remainder of the fiscal year, but the administration is unwilling to share that information with Congress. We expect the Chief of Staff of the Army and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to be open and honest with their funding requirements and cooperate with Congress in addressing their shortfalls.

I am very concerned about the impact of the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan on the future of our All-Volunteer Force. The All-Volunteer Force depends on volunteers, and the statistics show that the number of volunteers is dwindling. The Army, in particular, is in trouble. Through the end of May, the Active-Duty Army is 8,321 enlistments below its goal of 49,285. That is about a 20 percent shortfall. The Army Reserve is 2,392 below its goal of 11,944. That is a 20 percent shortfall. The Army National Guard is 9,705 soldiers below its goal of 39,957. That is almost a 25 percent shortfall. That is a total shortfall of 20,418 recruits for the Total Army. Although the Marine Corps is on track to meet its recruiting goal for the year, it too is facing challenges. As General Hagee said in his opening statement, "Fiscal year 2005 is proving to be the most difficult recruiting year we have had in 10 years" and "the recruiting marketplace will become even more challenging in fiscal year 2006."

The Services are meeting or exceeding overall retention goals. However, this too can change if our military personnel become exhausted by repeated combat tours. Some are already on their second and third tours in Iraq. If our career professionals decide that they have had enough, their departure has the very real potential of breaking our force.

The only way we have been able to meet our troop requirements in Iraq and Afghanistan is by mobilizing the overextended National Guard and Reserves. This has been done at great cost to them, their families, and our communities. Local govern-

ments have lost key first responders when they were ordered to Active-Duty. Governors are concerned about whether they will have the National Guard personnel and equipment to respond to natural disasters as they occur. We continue to hear from employers about the adverse impact on small businesses and self-employed National Guard and Reserve members. Finally, some are wondering if the National Guard and Reserves will be ready the next time they are needed. In a memorandum to the Army Chief of Staff, the Chief of the Army Reserve stated that "the Army Reserve is additionally in grave danger of being unable to meet other operational requirements including those in named OPLANS and CONUS emergencies, and is rapidly degenerating into a 'broken' force." The Chief of the National Guard Bureau recently stated that "My concern is that the National Guard will not be a ready force the next time it is needed, whether here at home or abroad." Our over-reliance on the Guard and Reserve may have severely impacted on them as effective military units.

Because we have virtually exhausted our supply of ground forces, they will not be readily available if needed for yet another operation. In the assessment of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the shortage of ground forces will result in taking longer to succeed in another conflict, such as any possible conflict with North Korea or Iran.

This leads us directly to the question of end strength. The overriding issue is whether the Army and Marine Corps have sufficient personnel to maintain current force levels for future rotations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Currently, Reserve Component personnel (National Guard and Reserves) constitute approximately 40 percent of the 139,000 personnel in Iraq. The Army Reserve is approaching a point at which it will soon use up all personnel available for deployment, and some reports indicate that the National Guard has used nearly all of its combat forces. It is clear that the National Guard and Reserves will not be able to relieve our Active component forces for much longer.

Many of us have been concerned about the size of our Army and Marine Corps for some time. The Administration has rebuffed our attempts over the last several years to increase the authorized end strengths of these forces. I believe that our proposed increases were sustainable when we made them because we had a much more favorable recruiting market at the time. Now I fear that it is too late. Even if we all agreed to end strength increases, we may not be able to enlist the volunteers we would need. Earlier this year, the Senate Armed Services Committee adopted a provision that would increase the Army by 20,000 soldiers over this year's authorized level, and 40,000 soldiers more than the administration requested for next year. We have to make an assessment of whether the Army can achieve that increase if it remains in the authorization act.

Now we must ask ourselves what we can do to help the Army and Marine Corps address their recruiting problems so that they can meet end strength requirements. We know that the continuing news about casualties in Iraq and Afghanistan have caused the influencers—mothers and fathers, other relatives, teachers, guidance counselors, ministers, and coaches—to discourage young men and women who would otherwise be willing to serve in the military. The improving economy and favorable job prospects have given these young people other attractive options.

The Army has been attempting to address its recruiting shortfall by adding recruiters, increasing bonuses, lowering standards, and increasing targeted advertising. But it appears that will not be enough.

I look forward to hearing what our witnesses have to say about other initiatives to address their recruiting and equipping challenges. I am particularly interested in what we can do to help.

Chairman WARNER. Secretary Chu, we recognize you.

STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID S.C. CHU, UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS, ACCOMPANIED BY: HON. CHARLES S. ABELL, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS

Dr. CHU. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a great privilege to be here.

Chairman WARNER. We recognize you as senior man aboard, but perhaps the Chief of Staff of the Army would like to make some introductions.

General SCHOOMAKER. Sir, I was planning to do it within the opening statement, but I will go ahead and do it right now if you would like.

Chairman WARNER. Well then, go by your plan. We will let Secretary Chu lead off.

I am going to ask you to draw up that microphone very close to you.

Dr. CHU. Thank you, sir.

Chairman WARNER. That helps.

Dr. CHU. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Levin, members of the committee. It is a great privilege to be here this morning.

I would like to begin by offering my thanks to our extraordinary people in uniform today. We have at this table some of the Nation's most senior military leaders, and we have in our audience this morning some of the extraordinary noncommissioned officers that have been so essential to the Nation's success.

As members of this committee know, it was 32 years ago this summer that President Nixon returned the United States to its underlying tradition, and that is a tradition of a volunteer force. That force has performed magnificently over the last 20 years. We saw that performance in Panama over 15 years ago. We saw it in the First Persian Gulf War. We saw it in the protection of the Kurds during the 1990s and the enforcement of the No Fly Zone in Iraq. We have seen it in Haiti twice within recent years. We have seen it in the Balkans, in which they have brought a measure of stability. We have seen it in Afghanistan, where they have given that country an historic chance for a democratic government. We see it today in Iraq.

It is a magnificent performance. As I think General Schoomaker and General Hagee would emphasize, however, it is not simply an All-Volunteer Force; it is also an All-Recruited Force. Recruiting and retention are a constant challenge for the Department of Defense (DOD), no less so at the present moment in history.

Our success, in my judgment, in sustaining the volunteer force over the decades is the product of a partnership between the legislative and executive branches. We particularly appreciate the authorities that have been given us to achieve that success. We particularly value the bonus authorities that you have provided and that you are considering providing in this year's authorization bill, that allow us to address issues on a targeted basis. I have in mind the Reserve affiliation bonus that we have requested; the critical skills retention bonus for the Reserve Forces to parallel that offered to the Active Forces; increasing the ceiling for hardship duty pay to allow us to address the fairness of compensation based upon the burdens being borne by our personnel; the increase that the House has offered in the enlistment bonus to $30,000—some have talked of higher figures; and its endorsement of a new idea that has been brought forward of a referral reward for those who help bring others to the ranks.

There is a second way, in my judgment, that you can assist us, and you have been assisting us, and that is speaking out about the value of military service and the values that young men and women will bring back from military service to their civilian communities. Our Nation's birthday, as we all know, occurs in just a

few days and I can think of no better occasion on which to celebrate the value of military service than that date.

Thank you, sir.

[The prepared joint statement of Secretary Chu and Mr. Abell follows:]

PREPARED JOINT STATEMENT BY HON. DAVID S.C. CHU AND HON. CHARLES S. ABELL

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman and members of this distinguished subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to be here today.

The All-Volunteer Force is performing well. Although the Army is experiencing recruiting difficulties, recruiting and retention overall remains solid. Today, we will review with you the current status of military recruiting and retention and discuss some of the current initiatives we are undertaking with the Services to address the challenges we face.

Where we face challenges, we take the necessary steps to resolve problems. We continually review compensation packages to ensure that they are adequate to meet the needs of the members, whether the need be for basic pay, allowances, special pays, or survivor benefits. We work with the Services to take full advantage of the strength that comes from combining resources and knowledge, and of the research that we have done over the years to assist us.

The decisions made about authorities and funding for the next fiscal year matter a great deal to those who have volunteered to serve our Nation. We are happy to be here to answer your questions and discuss the programs that we believe are essential to sustaining our volunteer military in meeting our National security requirements.

ACTIVE DUTY RECRUITING AND RETENTION

The success of our All-Volunteer Force begins with recruiting, and the viability of the force is assured with successful retention. This has been easier in some years than it has in others. We gratefully acknowledge how Congress provides additional resources during the more challenging times to facilitate our success in both recruiting and retention.

Active Duty Recruiting

During fiscal year 2004, the military Services recruited 176,026 first-term enlistees and an additional 6,799 individuals with previous military service into their Active-Duty components, for a total of 182,825 Active-Duty recruits, attaining over 100 percent of the DOD goal of 181,308 accessions.

While meeting our quantitative goals is important, we also need to have the right mix of recruits who will complete their term of service and perform successfully in training and on the job. The "quality" of the accession cohort is critical. We typically report recruit quality along two dimensions—aptitude and educational achievement. Both are important, but for different reasons.

All military applicants take a written enlistment test called the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). One component of that test is the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT), which measures math and verbal skills. Those who score above average on the AFQT are in Categories I–IIIA. We value these higher-aptitude recruits because they are easier to train and perform better on the job than their lower-scoring (below average) peers (Categories IIIB–IV).

We also value recruits with a high school diploma because they are more likely to complete their initial 3 years of service. About 80 percent of recruits who have received a high school diploma complete their first 3 years, yet only about 50 percent of those who have not completed high school will make it. Those holding an alternative credential, such as a high school equivalency or a General Educational Development (GED) certificate, fall between those two extremes.

In conjunction with the National Academy of Sciences, the Department developed a mathematical model that links educational attainment, aptitude, and recruiting resources to job performance. With this model we established recruit quality benchmarks of 90 percent high school diploma graduates and 60 percent scoring above average on the AFQT. Those benchmarks were set by examining the relationship among costs associated with recruiting, training, attrition, and retention, using as a standard the performance level obtained by the enlisted force cohort of 1990. Thus, the benchmarks reflect the aptitude and education levels necessary to mini-

mize personnel and training costs while maintaining the required performance level of that force.

Over the past 20 years, the military Services have met or exceeded the Department's benchmarks for quality recruits. The quality of new Active-Duty recruits remained high in fiscal year 2004. DOD-wide, 95 percent of new Active-Duty recruits were high school diploma graduates (against a goal of 90 percent) and 73 percent scored above average on the AFQT (versus a desired minimum of 60 percent).

Through May of fiscal year 2005, all Services except Army continued to meet or exceed both quantity and quality objectives for Active duty enlistees. The Army has achieved 40,964 of its 49,285 accession goal through May, for an 83 percent accomplishment. Army quality levels, however, remain strong (Table 1).

Table 1. FY 2005 Active Duty Enlisted Recruiting Through May

	Quantity			Quality *	
Active Duty Enlisted Recruiting (Preliminary Through May)	Accessions	Goal	% of Goal	% High School Diploma Graduate (HSDG); *DoD Benchmark = 90%*	% Scoring at / above 50th Percentile on AFQT (Categories I-IIIA); *DoD Benchmark = 60%*
Army	40,964	49,285	83%	90%	72%
Navy*	18,456	18,440	100%	96%	71%
Marine Corps	17,241	16,935	102%	98%	69%
Air Force	9,047	8,968	101%	99%	79%
Total	85,708	93,628	92%	95%	72%

The Army is applying additional resources to achieve its recruiting goal of 80,000 soldiers by the end of the fiscal year. The Army is aggressively pursuing three avenues of approach: (1) adding active duty recruiters; (2) offering stronger incentives, with increased enlistment bonuses and an increase in the Army College Fund; and (3) using more targeted advertising, focusing on "influencers," particularly parents.

The Services accessed 16,431 commissioned officers to Active Duty in fiscal year 2004, with Army, Navy, and Marine Corps meeting their numerical commissioning needs. In fiscal year 2005, Active-Duty officer accessions are on track in all Services for numerical success this year.

Active-Duty Retention

Over the past 3 years, the Department has worked to improve servicemembers' quality of life. We continue to work with Congress to achieve needed military pay raises, and to develop flexible and discretionary compensation programs. We have every confidence that such funding and policy modifications will be sufficient to ensure continued success in achieving authorized strength levels.

Army and Marine Corps met or exceeded fiscal year 2004 retention goals. Navy and Air Force were retaining more than their desired levels at the outset of the year, but force-shaping initiatives aimed at balancing manpower skills and assisting with force reduction caused them to retain fewer members during the last quarter of fiscal year 2004. For fiscal year 2005, retention is on track (Table 2).

Table 2. FY 2005 Active Duty Enlisted Retention Through May 2005

Active Duty Enlisted Retention (Final Through May)	Reenlisted Thru May 05	Mission
Army		
- *Initial*	17,579	18,700
- *Mid Career*	15,834	16,364
- *Career*	11,920	9,208
Navy		
- *Initial*	58.5%	53%
- *Mid Career*	66.7%	69%
- *Career*	85.5%	85%
Air Force		
- *Initial*	52%	55%
- *Mid Career*	46%	75%
- *Career*	94%	95%
Marine Corps		
- *Initial*	5,689	3,966
- *Career*	4,943	3,386

Stop Loss

The Army is the only Service currently using Stop Loss. The Army Stop Loss program affects less than 1 percent of the total force (9,044 Active component soldiers, 3,762 USAR soldiers, and 2,480 ARNG soldiers in May 2005). The active Army Unit Stop Loss program takes effect 90 days prior to unit deployment or with official deployment order notification, and remains in effect through the date of redeployment to permanent duty stations, plus a maximum of 90 days. Reserve Component Unit Stop Loss begins 90 days prior to mobilization or with official mobilization alert deployment order notification, and continues through mobilization, and for a period up to 90 days following unit demobilization.

Army initiatives of Modularity, Restructuring, and Rebalancing the Active/Reserve component mix, and Force Stabilization will, over time, eliminate any need for Stop Loss.

RESERVE COMPONENT RECRUITING AND RETENTION

There has been considerable discussion about the stress that the global war on terrorism is placing on the force—both Active and Reserve. A repeated question is: What levels of utilization can the National Guard and Reserve sustain while still maintaining a viable Reserve Force? Recognizing that the global war on terrorism will last for a number of years, the Department established a strategic approach to ensure the judicious and prudent use of the Reserve components in support of the war effort. We will continue to assess the impact of mobilization and deployments on the National Guard and Reserve, and adjust our policies as needed to sustain the Reserve components.

One way to examine mobilization of the National Guard and Reserve is in terms of today's force—those who are currently serving in the force. Of the 838,300 Reserve component members who are currently serving in the Selected Reserves, 364,860 have been mobilized between September 11, 2001 and February 28, 2005—representing 43.5 percent of the current force.

Compared to Operation Desert Storm when we mobilized 30,000 Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) members, we have not used the IRR in an aggressive manner to support the global war on terrorism. In the past 3 years, we have mobilized 8,790 IRR members. However, further utilization of the IRR remains a viable option for meeting both near-term and long-term commitments.

We must establish the proper expectations for our Reserve component members, their families, their employers, and the public in general. We are undertaking a program to foster appropriate expectations for the 21st century in terms of: (1) the frequency and duration of military duty and (2) predictability of extended duty.

Reserve Recruiting

The Reserve components continue to face a challenging recruiting environment. In 2004, four of the six DOD Reserve components met or exceeded their recruiting goals. While we have seen mixed results in the first 8 months of the fiscal year, most Reserve components are struggling to meet their recruiting goals (Table 3). The Army National Guard achieved 76 percent of its recruiting goal through May fiscal year 2005, and the Army Reserve achieved about 74 percent of its goal.

Table 3. Reserve Component Recruiting Performance through May 2005

Reserve Enlisted Recruiting, FY05 Through May	Goal	Accessions	% of Goal	% High School Diploma Graduate (HSDG)	% Scoring at or above 50th Percentile on Armed Forces Qualification Test (Cat I-IIIA)
Army National Guard	39,957	30,252	76%	85%	54%
Army Reserve	16,143	11,889	74%	90%	74%
Naval Reserve	7,397	6,484	88%	91%	84%
Marine Corps Reserve	5,139	5,154	100%	95%	74%
Air National Guard	6,866	5,495	80%	unk	unk
Air Force Reserve	5,001	5,831	117%	90%	72%

While the other Reserve components have been able to meet the DOD quality benchmarks for new recruits, the Army National Guard has historically experienced difficulty in meeting those standards. Army National Guard recruit quality levels, at 85 and 54 percent, are respectively, 5 and 6 percentage points below the DOD benchmarks of 90 percent high school diploma graduates and 60 percent scoring in the upper half on the AFQT. Rather than recruiting from a national market like the active Component, the National Guard must recruit from local communities to fill vacancies. With National Guard units located in over 3,000 communities throughout the Nation, meeting the quality benchmarks has presented challenges. Conversely, the community-based nature of the Guard works to its advantage in retention, since "quitting the Guard" before a guard member completes his or her service obligation is very apparent to the whole town.

Recruiters report that there is a reduced propensity to join the military among today's youth. Due to the realities of war, there is less encouragement today from parents, teachers, and other influencers to join the military. Our efforts to recognize the value of service should help this over time. In addition to the reduced propensity to serve, fewer individuals are separating from the Active components, and fewer of those who do separate are affiliating with the Reserve components. These factors, coupled with an improving economy and lower unemployment, adversely affect recruiting.

The Army is also aggressively attacking any potential shortfall in Reserve component recruiting through three avenues of approach: (1) adding Reserve component recruiters, with an additional 1,900 Army National Guard recruiters and 734 Army Reserve recruiters programmed by the end of the fiscal year; (2) offering stronger incentives, with increased enlistment bonuses for both prior service and non-prior service recruits; and (3) using increased advertising, including targeted advertising to parents and influencers. Your support of these efforts is essential.

Reserve Retention

Retention in the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve remains very strong. Attrition in 2004, and thus far in 2005, is consistent with pre-global war on terrorism levels, and is actually considerably lower than pre-war levels in the Army Reserve. We expect attrition to remain within acceptable limits. The support of Congress and stronger retention incentives help offset what might otherwise be a reduced likelihood to reenlist. The Department has established planning factors that

will provide greater career stability and predictability to Reserve members, their families, and their employers. The Services are implementing policies based on these planning factors now.

Table 4. Reserve Component Attrition through April 2005

Selected Reserve Enlisted Attrition Rate (in percent)	2000 YTD (Apr)	FY 2004 YTD (Apr)	FY 2005 YTD (Apr)	FY 2005 Target (Ceiling)
Army National Guard	11.6	11.1	12.5	19.5
Army Reserve	16.6	12.5	13.1	28.6
Naval Reserve	17.3	17.4	18.0	36.0
Marine Corps Reserve	16.2	16.0	11.0	30.0
Air National Guard	7.1	7.6	6.1	12.0
Air Force Reserve	10.5	8.1	8.4	18.0
DOD	12.8	11.6	11.9	

LEGISLATION IN SUPPORT OF TOTAL FORCE RECRUITING AND RETENTION

Recruiting and retaining the right people in the right skills in the right number has always been a challenge and continues to be our challenge today. None of this comes easily; and congressional support continues to be key. We are grateful for the across-the-board 3.1 percent pay raise, the increases in Basic Housing Allowance for Housing (BAH), which allowed us to reduce average member out-of-pocket expenses from 3.5 percent to 0, and the targeted increases in pays and allowances for our brave men and women fighting the war in Iraq and Afghanistan and other dangerous places. We are also pleased with the related increases in pay and allowances and bonuses for our members in the Reserve component.

The reductions in last year's special pays and selective reenlistment bonuses, i.e., Army—$6.3 million, Navy—$12 million, Marine Corps—$4.8 million, and AF—$90 million, have presented challenges to retain servicemembers essential for meeting our military and humanitarian missions around the world. As we face these challenges, we seek your continued support in the forthcoming mid-year review and any associated reprogrammings.

We appreciate support of appropriations consistent with the proposed changes to our authorities. We are requesting an increase in the maximum amount for the Hardship Duty Pay and the House includes this provision in their bill. Our request recognizes and compensates our women and men who are serving in a designated hardship location, participating in a designated hardship mission. Our leaders need the flexibility to raise the amounts paid in order to (1) quickly recognize troops serving under the most arduous of circumstances, (2) support sequential assignment, and (3) meet future needs as they emerge and we ask the Senate to pass this provision. Our other major proposal increases the maximum allowable amount that can be offered under the Selective Reenlistment Bonus program is also in the House bill. This increase is necessary for targeting critical skills, as required, to retain sufficient high quality personnel and counter the lure of the high technology private sector and we ask the Senate to pass this provision.

SUSTAINING ARMY STRENGTH

The Active Army, in spite of taking a $6.3 million reduction in its special pays and selective reenlistment bonus funding this fiscal year, has increased its enlisted retention mission from 56,100 in fiscal year 2004 to 64,162 in fiscal year 2005, an increase of almost 15 percent. They are pursuing constructive levers, such as Force Stabilization policy initiatives, periodic reenlistment bonus program updates, and targeted special pays to influence soldiers and, most importantly, families to reenlist.

In September 2003, the Army announced and implemented a $5,000 reenlistment bonus which was paid, in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, and South Korea. Through May 2005, more than 14,500 soldiers have taken advantage of the Present Duty Assignment Selective Reenlistment Bonus by reenlisting to stay with units in Afghanistan, Iraq, or Kuwait. The Army's current program offers bonus amounts up to $15,000 to soldiers in these locations.

The Department is taking advantage of a unique force restructuring process—the "Blue" Services, Air Force and Navy, are reducing strength while the "Green" Serv-

ice, Army, is increasing. Our "Blue to Green" program provides sailors and airmen with a unique opportunity to "Go Army" under an initiative intended to rebalance the military and preserve human capital. Sailors and airmen in skills identified as excess who are qualified to remain in Service, shall be given the opportunity to apply for immediate inter-service enlistment into the Army. The Department is also working with the Services to boost prior service accessions by sending letters to military alumni inviting them back to Active Duty (recapturing first term losses).

The Department is also working closely with the Department of Homeland Security's Citizenship and Immigration Service to expedite citizenship applications for resident aliens who serve honorably as members of our Armed Forces.

To capitalize on our successes in retention and sustain that momentum, we must continue to invest in areas that leverage readiness. Authorities for flexible compensation tools enable the Department to tailor incentives to respond to specific readiness demands and provide the capacity to efficiently start and stop them.

We note that the House and this committee included two provisions in their versions of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2006 that will very positively affect Reserve component recruiting. The first provision would repeal the current affiliation bonus authority and combine it with the non-prior service accession bonus to provide up to $10,000 to an individual who is separating from the Active Forces with a remaining military service obligation, and agrees to serve in the Selected Reserve for a period of not less than 3 years in a critical skill, unit, or pay grade. We believe this will help us overcome the current shortfall in individuals transitioning from Active to Reserve service.

The second provision would authorize a critical skills retention bonus for Selected Reserve members similar to the current critical skills retention bonus available to the active components. While attrition throughout the Reserve components is consistent with acceptable norms, attrition in certain skills is too high. This bonus authority would permit us to target those skills by offering bonuses to members who agree to serve in those skills for at least 2 years. A member would be limited to receiving $100,000 over an entire Reserve career under this authority. This amount is half of the career limit of $200,000 for Active component members for a similar bonus authority. We are certain that this bonus authority will help us retain the right members in the right skills.

Additionally, we note that the House has included two provisions in its version of the NDAA for Fiscal Year 2006 that will have a definite, positive impact on military recruiting. The House raises the maximum level for an enlistment bonus from the current $20,000 to $30,000. The Services now use enlistment bonuses in support of recruiting for a variety of purposes: to attract high quality youth, to steer recruits into "hard-to-fill" and critical skills, to even-flow the training base through seasonal use, to encourage enlistment for longer terms, and to reward advanced education. Raising the cap to $30,000 will give the Services more flexibility in combining the uses of the bonus by encouraging particularly high quality potential recruits to enlist for longer terms in critical skills and enter Active Duty when most needed.

The second provision authorizes a 1-year pilot test allowing the Army to offer a $1,000 referral bonus to existing soldiers. This bonus would be paid for referring an applicant who subsequently enlists and completes initial entry training. Not only will this bonus be a boon to Army recruiting at a time when it is needed, the 1-year pilot will give the Department an opportunity to judge the merit of such a program for Department-wide adoption. Since your bill includes no such provisions, we urge you to recede to the House on these two during your upcoming conference deliberations.

REDUCING STRESS ON THE FORCE

Three other initiatives proposed by the administration would also help reduce stress on our force: strengthening the authority of the Department of Defense to train and equip the forces of other nations; creating in the Department of State a capacity for stabilization and reconstruction; and civilianizing military positions where appropriate, returning those billets to military use as needed. We regret that the amount and the scope of the request remains unfulfilled. The House State and Foreign Operations Appropriation Bills provide only $7.7 million of the requested $124 million for the newly created State Department Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) and neither the House or Senate Authorization bills include a requested authority for DOD to support S/CRS with a $200 million drawdown authority. The appropriation process has reduced the funding for civilianization by $400 million. We urge Congress to reconsider these marks and provide the funding and authority originally requested, to help reduce the stress on our forces.

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT OUR EFFORTS

Today's environment poses some recruiting and retention challenges for our All-Volunteer Force. The pressures of high operational tempo, increases in Army end strength in support of global war on terrorism, and a rapidly recovering economy have made it difficult to achieve increased Army recruiting goals. We greatly appreciate how congressional support in previous periods of difficulty has helped us maintain the AVF to which we are all committed.

Today I would like to encourage you to support us in a way you may not have thought of—by lending us your time and your voice. We are increasing our efforts to communicate the Value of Service to the American people. Throughout our Nation's history, military Service had a tremendous formative impact on many of our greatest leaders—from Presidents to captains of industry to educators and even legislators—after 10 years of much smaller forces, the patriotic tendency may be waning in our society.

In order to address this shift, we are developing a focused public affairs campaign aimed at bolstering patriotic impulses and highlighting the value of military service. The ultimate objective is to reach out to target parents and influencers in a way that leads them to support their son's and daughter's decision to serve. We hope that you will partner with us in this effort by teaming with our speakers' bureau to emphasize the importance, nobility, and Value of Service.

With your continued cooperation in support of the programs I have outlined, we can certainly see the Army through its current challenges, ensuring continued viability of our All-Volunteer Force.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, I want to thank you and members of this subcommittee for your advocacy on behalf of the men and women of the Department of Defense. Whether the career of a member of the Total Force is measured in months or years, whether that career is spent in a Reserve component, an Active component, a combination of the two, or as a Department of Defense civilian, the Nation's gratitude for dedicated service is proved in your continued support and funding for the programs that keep the force strong and healthy. We look forward to your questions.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

General Myers.

STATEMENT OF GEN. RICHARD B. MYERS, USAF, CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

General MYERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Levin, and other members of the committee. Thank you particularly for your continued support of our men and women in uniform and this opportunity to discuss the readiness issues that we have in our military.

Despite the current operational demands on our forces, we are fully prepared to support our strategy, and to assure our allies while we dissuade, deter, and if necessary, defeat any adversary. Our forces are the most capable in the world, in large part because they are the best trained, the best equipped, and best led. Many are deployed in countries around the world or at sea providing stability, peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, and aiding in this struggle against violent extremism.

Current requirements for the force are significant and are not likely to decrease in the near term. In Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, our high tempo operations have created challenges in several areas, including our force sourcing, mobilization, training and reconstitution, and equipment wear and tear. In the face of continuing demands on our forces, we are analyzing all our policies and are making changes to mitigate challenges to our readiness.

Congressional support both in the annual budget and supplemental funding are absolutely essential to help address these readiness challenges, and we appreciate very much that support.

Our Nation's number one military asset, as always, remains our people. The administration, Congress, and the DOD have made raising our servicemembers' standard of living a top priority. I thank Congress for your tremendous support to our troops and to their families.

Our service men and women continue to perform superbly. Morale is high under some very challenging conditions. I am tremendously proud of how they are handling these challenges, as I know you are.

We anticipate that the rest of fiscal year 2005 will be challenging as well for both Active and Reserve component recruiting, as was said, and are particularly concerned with the Active Army, Army Reserve, and the Army National Guard. To mitigate these challenges, we have increased the number of recruiters, enhanced enlistment bonuses, and have modified our recruiting strategy.

The transformation efforts also involve measures to address our readiness challenges. Some of these include: the rebalancing of our Reserve components with the Active components to achieve the appropriate mix for the 21st century; the Army's modular force initiative, which involves a total redesign of the operational Army into a larger, more powerful and flexible force; and the creation of a more efficient global force management process with U.S. Joint Forces Command as a single-source force provider that has a global perspective.

I think we have made a lot of progress on our transformational efforts, and we have had some successes. We have to continue to invest heavily in transformation both materially and intellectually to meet the challenges facing our country today and certainly in the future.

As I said a week ago in this very room, our military is unwavering in our focus and our resolve and our dedication to peace and freedom. But we cannot do it alone. We need your continued leadership to reinforce Americans' resolve. I do believe our way of life remains at stake in this struggle against violent extremism, and I think we are also entering a crucial stage of this long struggle. The price for complacency would be catastrophic. The reward, on the other hand, will be freedom.

I thank you again, committee members and Mr. Chairman, for your continued support. We look forward to your questions.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, General Myers.

Secretary Abell.

Mr. ABELL. Thank you, sir. Good morning, sir, Senator Levin, members of the committee. It is always a pleasure to be back at the United States Senate.

Despite the sort of dour reports that we hear about the recruiting efforts of the Department, I think there is a great deal of good news in the Department's recruiting efforts as well. Our Air Force, Navy, and Marines are ahead of their year-to-date numeric accession goals, and I am confident that they will meet or exceed their annual goals. Our Services continue to meet the Department's quality benchmarks for the Active Force. Recent Gallup polls show

that public confidence in our military is high and our All-Volunteer Force is not in jeopardy.

The Army is facing some challenges, but is focused on the mission. The emerging results for June show some positive trends, and I am sure General Schoomaker will report more on that.

I would like to focus for a minute on something the chairman said and that is the thousands of the best noncommissioned officers in our force that are stationed throughout America, that are on duty in recruiting offices from Time Square to the most rural parts of our country. These noncommissioned officers, many of whom are veterans of deployments in support of the global war on terror, are the face of our military Services in our local communities. They work 16 or more hours per day, many of them 7 days a week, contacting young men and women who meet the high standards that we demand of those who enlist.

These noncommissioned officers face resistance from many of our educators and school administrators. They must calmly and dispassionately discuss the nobility of service, the opportunity and benefits of military service, to concerned parents and coaches and mentors. They face intense pressure to succeed, and, because of the type of people they are and their commitment to the values and the ethos of service, some of this pressure is self-generated. Of course, some of it is from folks like us.

Mr. Chairman, we have to help these great noncommissioned officers succeed. They need additional tools. Dr. Chu has mentioned a few, bonus authorities, and new and innovative ideas that we have asked for in our legislative package. They also need to hear from national and community leaders that military service is a noble undertaking and that we appreciate and respect those who serve.

Our youth have a propensity to service. They want to join. Many times a parent or a coach or a school counselor or other trusted adult convinces this young man or woman just to wait a while, to put off their service. We all need to work with our respective recruiters to overcome this impediment. We need to give them better tools. We also need to give them our moral support.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I stand by for your questions.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Secretary Abell.

General Schoomaker.

STATEMENT OF GEN PETER J. SCHOOMAKER, USA, CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY

General SCHOOMAKER. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. Chairman Warner, Senator Levin, and distinguished members of the committee: It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to appear before you today. With your permission, I would like to submit a written statement for the record.

Chairman WARNER. Without objection, the statements of all witnesses in total will be put in the record.

General SCHOOMAKER. Thank you, sir.

Before I begin my short opening remarks, I would like to introduce the five soldiers to whom we awarded the first Army Combat Action Badges yesterday in the Pentagon. They are seated here be-

hind me, and they truly represent our whole Army, our total Army, Active, Guard, and Reserve.

First of all, directly to my right rear is Sergeant April Pashley, who is from the U.S. Army Reserve. She is a civil affairs team sergeant who has served in Iraq with the 173rd Airborne Brigade in northern Iraq in the early phases of the war.

Next to her is Sergeant Manuel Montano, a military police team leader, originally from Colorado.

Sergeant Timothy Gustavson, a forward observer, originally from Kansas.

Sergeant Michael Boyas, a Stryker crewman, originally from Washington.

Sergeant Sean Steens, a motor transport operator, originally from Alabama.

These are the great fine people, the great young people that everybody has spoken about here. They represent them. I am very proud to have them here.

Chairman WARNER. The committee welcomes them, General. [Applause.]

We could take a minute to describe the evolution of this important designator. It originated with the Army, and was approved by the Secretary of Defense. I notice that you proudly wear the Combat Infantryman's Badge. Can you distinguish how those two awards differ?

General SCHOOMAKER. Sir, I would be glad to. The Combat Infantryman's Badge is awarded to infantry and Special Forces. The badge originated in 1942 in World War II for those that participate routinely in direct ground combat. We designed and authorized the Combat Action Badge this year to recognize the fact that the battlefield has changed and that all soldiers are warriors, and that those that perform satisfactorily under fire in accordance with the rules of engagement, regardless of military occupational specialty (MOS) or regardless of unit of assignment, gender, or whatever, should be recognized for their satisfactory service under fire. It is very similar to the Marines' Combat Action Ribbon, if that helps.

These five soldiers are the very first, and so all across the Army today those soldiers—this is retroactive, by the way, to September 18, 2001, when the President signed the executive order on the global war on terrorism.

Chairman WARNER. But if I can pick up on that, I think it's an important recognition that the battlefield today is 360 degrees. That was one of the motives, I presume, and a very important one, that recognition.

General SCHOOMAKER. Sir, that is correct. You will notice if you examine closely that four out of five of these soldiers have all been wounded in combat action.

Chairman WARNER. We have the greatest respect for these gentlemen and gentlewoman that have joined us here today. Thank you very much.

General SCHOOMAKER. Thank you, sir.

Earlier this month, as has been noted, the Gallup organization reported that the American people's confidence in the Armed Forces is at the top of all institutions in our society, and that continues to be the trend. This is due, no doubt, to the service of sol-

diers like these that are with us. We are all humbled by the faith that the American people have placed in us, and we realize that we cannot take this faith for granted, that we must communicate with them honestly and effectively.

Therefore, I appreciate the opportunity to be able to tell the story of the United States Army before the American people through forums like this today. America remains a Nation at war, and this is a war unlike any other in our history and one we will be fighting for the foreseeable future. While this is not just the Army's war, we acutely feel its burdens. Our Army exists to serve the American people, to protect enduring national interests, and to fulfill our national military requirements.

Our Army has honorably served the Nation for over 230 years and, we celebrated our birthday June 14. We continue to do so now in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other parts of the globe, deterring aggression and securing our homeland. We are doing all of this and transforming at the same time to meet tomorrow's challenges.

Of course, while the forms of war may vary, there are certain constants, and soldiers have been and will remain the centerpiece of America's Army. The soldiers who are fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan reflect the very best of what America has to offer. They are motivated by an unwavering belief that they are serving for what is good, right, and just, and that they will be victorious. Today's soldiers epitomize the principle of selfless service.

Like those in generations past who have worn the uniform and borne arms in the Nation's defense, today's soldiers understand that our constitutional liberties and guarantees are worth fighting for. In fact, by raising their right hand and taking the oath of military service with its obligations and risks, today's soldiers have proudly answered the call to duty that pierces the air once again, and I am humbled by their service and sacrifices.

As we lead, train, and resource our soldiers, we must not lose sight of the fact that the Army's character is defined by those like the sergeants that are with me today here before you. They have demonstrated daily their commitment to live by the ideals contained in the warrior ethos and our Army values. Of course, these values reflect our Nation's values.

While there is much good news, there are some areas of concern, and I know that is why we are here today. It is critical to recognize and acknowledge the war-induced strain felt by our institution and the soldiers and their families who are bearing the burden of this global war. I know your questions and our answers will address both our accomplishments and challenges. It is important to remember, however, that the challenges and opportunities are not simply the Army's to face. They are America's challenges, and we will not succeed without congressional support and the support of the American people.

Our Nation is asking much of its Army, and I remain confident that we will continue to do our part as we achieve the critical mission we face together.

In closing, I would like to thank this committee for the opportunity to appear before you and for your continued support, which has been tremendous, for the men and women in uniform today. I look forward to answering your questions. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of General Schoomaker follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY GEN PETER J. SCHOOMAKER, USA

America remains a nation at war. This is a war unlike any other in our history and one we will be fighting for the foreseeable future. While this is not just the "Army's War," we acutely feel its burdens.

The Army exists to serve the American people, to protect enduring national interests, and to fulfill national military responsibilities. Our mission is enduring: to provide necessary forces and capabilities to the combatant commanders in support of the National Security and Defense Strategies. The Army is charged to provide forces able to conduct prompt, sustained combat on land as well as stability operations. Moreover, the Army is charged to provide logistical and other capabilities to enable other Services to accomplish their missions.

The Army has honorably served the Nation for over 230 years. We continue to do so now with contributions to the joint team in support of the combatant commanders. Of particular note are operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other theaters of war, deterring aggression, and securing the homeland. We are doing all this and transforming to meet tomorrow's challenges.

Of course, while the nature of war has changed, there is a constant—soldiers have been and will remain the "Centerpiece" of America's Army—and they must live America's values through Army Values and the Warrior's Ethos.

The soldiers who are fighting Iraq and Afghanistan are our sons and daughters. They reflect the best America has to offer. They are motivated by an unwavering belief that they will be victorious on the field of battle. Today's soldiers symbolize the principle of selfless service.

Like those in generations past who have worn the uniform and borne arms in America's defense, today's soldiers also recognize the ideal of freedom enshrined in the Constitution. They understand, as few others do, that our Constitution and the liberties it guarantees are worth fighting for. They are ideals each swore to "support and defend." They are ideals to which each promised to "bear true faith and allegiance." They are ideals each thinks worth dying for if necessary.

In fact, by raising their right hand and voluntarily taking the oath of military service, with its obligations and attendant risks, today's soldiers have proudly answered the call to duty that pierces the air once again.

I am humbled by their sacrifices in service to the Nation.

In addition to the Army's statutory responsibilities under title 10 and the Army's critical role in providing Relevant and Ready Landpower to combatant commanders in support of the full range of our global commitments, it is our obligation to the soldiers fighting this global war on terror that focuses our efforts.

Thanks to innovative leaders at all levels of DOD and the continued support of Congress, the Army is able to do the following despite the challenges of war.

- Train and equip soldiers to serve as warriors and grow adaptive leaders who are highly competent, flexible and able to deal with the 21st century challenges they now confront;
- Attain a quality of life and well-being for our people that matches the quality of the service they provide; and
- Provide infrastructure to enable the force to fulfill its strategic roles by establishing and maintaining the facilities and the information network required to develop, to generate, to train and to sustain the force.

By accomplishing these difficult tasks while engaged in war, the Army is effectively meeting the combatant commanders' needs today while simultaneously transforming to meet the Nation's needs tomorrow.

While there is much good news, there are admittedly some areas of concern. It is critical to recognize and acknowledge signals of stress and strain in order to adequately address potential problems. This testimony addresses both our accomplishments and our challenges.

What is important to remember, however, is that the challenges and opportunities are not simply the Army's to face, they are America's—from the young Americans who answer the call to duty, to the vital financial and moral support of Congress, the President, the Department of Defense, and the American people as we fight the global war on terror. The Army and our soldiers are dependent on the resources and the continued support of the people to achieve the critical mission we face together.

SOLDIERS AS THE ARMY'S CENTERPIECE

This is the first time in our Nation's history that the All-Volunteer Force has been tested during a prolonged war. It has performed exceptionally well because of the high-quality, versatile young Americans who have answered the call to duty.

Maintaining the viability of this force will depend on several factors which focus on soldiers. No matter how much the tools of warfare improve, it is the soldier who must exploit these tools to accomplish his mission. Conflict remains a human endeavor.

Reinforcing Army Values and the Warrior Ethos

Our soldiers are smart, competent and dedicated to defending the Nation. All are guided by Army Values. They commit to live by the ideals contained in The Soldier's Creed which captures the Warrior Ethos and outlines the professional attitudes and beliefs that American soldiers have lived in 230 years of service to the Nation.

Mental and physical toughness underpin the beliefs embraced in the Soldier's Creed and must be developed within all soldiers. The Warrior Ethos engenders the refusal to accept failure, the conviction that military service is much more than just another job, and the unfailing commitment to be victorious. It defines who soldiers are and what soldiers must do, is derived from Army Values, and reinforces a personal commitment to service.

Soldiers join the Army to serve. Our soldiers know that their service is required to secure our Nation's freedoms. However, it is critical that we continue to extol and reinforce these values and the Warrior Ethos in all we say and do in order to sustain the Army's culture of service in a challenging and dangerous wartime environment.

Training Soldiers and Growing Adaptive Leaders

To meet current wartime requirements in light of recent lessons learned and to prepare Army leaders and soldiers for the future, the Army relies heavily on both training and education.

The biggest recent change is in our initial military training where all soldiers are now receiving substantially more marksmanship training, hand-to-hand combat instruction, an increased emphasis on physical fitness, live-fire convoy training, and more focus on skills they need to succeed and survive in combat.

Leader development programs have been adjusted to reflect the challenging joint environment by incorporating the lessons learned from current operations. We are developing more rigorous, stressful training scenarios to prepare leaders to operate amidst uncertainty.

Furthermore, in recognition that we may well have little time to train prior to deploying, the Army has moved from an "alert-train-deploy" training model to a "train-alert-deploy-employ" model. For this reason, Army transformation is focused on providing key training and education to increase readiness for no-notice operations.

We have incorporated lessons learned into all of our systems and training scenarios, at our mobilization stations, and training bases. For example, we have increased funding to adapt ranges and facilities to reflect likely combat situations. We have adjusted Defense Language Institute requirements to meet operational needs for translators. We have increased soldier live-fire weapons training. Furthermore, at our Combat Training Centers (CTCs), which are critical "agents of change" within the Army, training scenarios are constantly updated to reflect changing battlefield conditions and incorporate recent lessons learned. In all scenarios, soldiers and leaders are presented with complex, cross-cultural challenges by large numbers of role players who act as both combatants and foreign citizens. Additionally, each of the training centers is building extensive urban combat training facilities, as well as cave and tunnel complexes, to simulate current wartime environments. It is clear that our adaptation of training is having an immediate, tangible impact in Iraq and Afghanistan and in other places around the world.

We have also implemented formal assignment guidelines to make best use of soldier and leader experiences to ensure we learn from our war veterans. For example, we are assigning them to key joint and operational billets as well as to key instructor and doctrine development positions.

The Army remains committed to the education of our leaders even during war. In fact, we are more aggressively pursuing leaders' education now than during any other period of conflict in our history. In addition to preparing leaders for specific billets, we are educating them to promote intellectual pluralism, increase their cultural awareness, and to encourage a "lifetime of learning."

Additionally, Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) is even more embedded throughout Army learning to provide in-depth understanding of joint, combined,

and interagency principles and concepts. This education is reinforced by joint assignment experiences.

Supported by Army Values, the Warrior Ethos and the experiences obtained through training and combat, Army leaders at all levels continue to hone the skills required to win in the complex environment of the 21st century.

Equipping Our Soldiers

Our soldiers rely on and deserve the very best protection and equipment we can provide. Of particular note, with the support of Congress, acting in full partnership with industry, the Army has dramatically increased the pace of both production and fielding of vehicle armor. Since February 15, any tactical wheeled vehicle leaving a forward operating base has had level one- or level two-armor. We are meeting all the timelines for providing capability to theater. June production will meet theater requirement for 10,079 Up-Armored HMMWVs (UAH). While July production of Add-on Armor (AOA) kits will meet the original requirement for 24,183 vehicles, the recent increase in requirements to 25,847 will be met in September. Again, all vehicles leaving forward operating bases have level one or level two-armor.

Of course, our enemies will continue to adapt their tactics. We remain committed to protect our soldiers by meeting and exceeding theater requirements in all areas.

The Army is working aggressively to provide soldiers the best possible equipment. We have established two programs to anticipate soldiers' needs and respond quickly to those identified by commanders: The Rapid Fielding Initiative (RFI) and the Rapid Equipping Force (REF). Through emergency supplemental appropriations, Congress has been especially helpful in funding these programs.

The RFI is designed to fill soldier equipment shortfalls by quickly fielding commercial off-the-shelf technology rather than waiting for standard acquisition programs to address these shortages. RFI is increasing soldier capabilities at an unprecedented pace. We are using fielding teams at home stations and in theater to ensure that every soldier receives 49 items including body armor, advanced ballistic helmets, hydration systems, ballistic goggles, kneepads, elbow pads, and other items. The equipment being issued to units reflects the lessons learned during 3 years of fighting in complex environments, including optical sights for weapons, grappling hooks, door rams and fiber optic viewers to support soldiers' ability to observe from protected positions. As of June 20, the Army has fielded RFI to 385,946 soldiers. We completed RFI in Iraq in November 2004. We are still on track to field the entire operational Army (840,000) by the end of fiscal year 2007.

The Rapid Equipping Force (REF) typically uses commercial and field—engineered solutions to quickly meet operational needs. REF has executed numerous initiatives to support the Army's Improvised Explosive Device (IED) Task Force and the requirements of the other Services. REF solutions meet immediate needs and are then assessed for wider fielding and incorporation into standard acquisition processes and provide predeployment and in-theater training on the technological solutions it provides.

Recruiting and Retaining Soldiers

To maintain our high-quality Army, we must recruit and retain the best soldiers in the world. We are proud of the men and women who join the Armed Forces to make a difference, to be part of something larger than themselves, and to "answer the call to duty" of their country.

As was the case last year, we are exceeding our retention goal in 2005. So far this year we have retained just under 104 percent of our goal in each of the components—active, Reserve, and National Guard. This is an incredibly good news story. soldiers who have borne the burden of this global war on terror for over 3 years, some who have deployed two and three times, are continuing to serve at an unprecedented rate. Their patriotism is humbling and testimony to the fact that they know what is at stake in this war and are answering the "call to duty" again. America can be proud.

In contrast, the recruiting environment is a more challenging one. While the Army continues to attract highly qualified and motivated young people, the Army's fiscal year 2005 enlisted accession mission of 80,000 is at serious risk and recruiting will remain challenging for the remainder of fiscal year 2005 and well into the future. In fact, fiscal year 2006 may be the toughest recruiting environment ever. For example, the Army is projected to enter fiscal year 2006 with the smallest beginning delayed entry program in history. This difficulty is a function of a good economy, declining youth propensity to enlist, and a declining number of people who recommend military service to those they know and care about. The negative impact of these factors on recruiting is not, however, just an Army challenge; it is America's

challenge. Leaders and influencers across America must extol the virtues of service to the Nation and encourage our young men and woman to serve in uniform.

The Army has taken important actions to mitigate the recruiting shortfalls. Our Recruiting Action Plan addresses the normal levers that affect mission achievement. We have added 1,215 active component on-production recruiters for a total of 6,279, and provided funding increases in incentives ($70.6 million), advertising ($70.8 million) and recruiter support ($86.5 million).

We do, however, ask the committee's assistance in a number of areas. First, the Army would benefit from an increase in the enlistment bonus cap. With a strong economy America's young men and women have many opportunities other than military service. We must compete to the degree necessary to fill our future ranks. Second, continue to support the Army's modularization initiatives. The Army Modular Force will provide the right mix of units to bring stability and predictability to overseas deployments. Third, we ask the Committee to assist in communicating the importance of answering the call to duty to the Nation, to our young adults, and to those who support them in their decisions. Our core values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage are demonstrated by our soldiers every day. Ours is a noble profession and the country needs their service.

Caring for Army Families and Soldiers

The quality-of-life programs that support our soldiers and their families, as well as our civilian workforce, play a major role in maintaining the overall viability of the All-Volunteer Army. It is also critical that we acknowledge that this global war on terror places unprecedented burdens on our soldiers and their families. We are cognizant of the fact that some marriages are strained by deployments and that soldiers and their families face significant stresses. We are tracking numerous metrics to ensure that we can meet the needs of those that serve and their loved ones.

We must provide an environment in which individual and family needs and aspirations can be met. Soldiers must understand the frequency and cycle of projected deployments. They must believe that their families will be provided for in their absence. Additionally, programs to encourage civilian employer support to Reserve component soldiers are essential. Developing the environment, compensation, education, and other incentives to keep the All-Volunteer Army appropriately manned may well be the greatest strategic challenge we face.

Army Well-Being programs contribute to the Army's ability to provide trained and ready forces. These programs enable leaders to care for their people while accomplishing the missions assigned to their units. Providing for the well-being of soldiers' families is a fundamental leadership imperative that requires adequate support and resources. For example, housing programs like the Residential Communities Initiative and Barracks Modernization Program, for which Congress has provided tremendous support, greatly increasing our ability to retain soldiers and families. Improvements in healthcare, child care, youth programs, schools, facilities, and other well-being initiatives also have a positive impact on soldier and family well-being.

We are pursuing numerous programs designed to improve spouse employment, ease the transitioning of high school students during moves and extend in-state college tuition rates to military families. We are also examining how best to expand support for veterans and National Guard and Army Reserve soldiers. For example, TRICARE policies now allow for the eligibility of National Guard and Reserve soldiers and their families. We are supporting our soldiers who have become casualties during war through the Disabled soldier Support System (DS3) an initiative that provides our most severely disabled soldiers and their families with a system of follow-up support beyond their transition from military service.

SOLDIER-CENTRIC TRANSFORMATION: MODULAR FORCE, REBALANCING, AND STABILIZATION

While more closely associated with the Army's mission of providing relevant and ready landpower to support the combatant commanders, the Army's Transformation initiatives have a direct, significant, and positive affect on soldiers.

First, we are restructuring from a division-based to a brigade-based force. These brigades are designed as modules, or self-sufficient and standardized Brigade Combat Teams, that can be more readily deployed and combined with other Army and joint forces to meet the precise needs of the combatant commanders. The result of this transformational initiative will be an operational Army that is larger and more powerful, flexible and rapidly deployable. The Army Modular Force will increase the combat power of the active component by 30 percent as well as the size of the Army's overall pool of available forces by 60 percent. The total number of available brigades will increase from 48 to 77 with 10 active brigades (three-and-a-third divisions in our old terms) being added by the end of 2006. We are on-track to achieve

80 percent of our planned conversion to the Army Modular Force by end of fiscal year 2006—well ahead of schedule. Our goal for this larger pool of available forces is to enable the Army to generate forces in a rotational manner that will support 2 years at home following each deployed year for Active Forces, 4 years at home following each deployed year for the Army Reserve and 5 years at home following each deployed year for National Guard Forces. Implementing this program will provide more time to train, predictable deployment schedules, and the continuous supply of landpower required by the combatant commanders and civil authorities.

Second, we are rebalancing our Active and Reserve Forces to produce more units with the skills in highest demand. This will realign the specialties of more than 100,000 soldiers, producing a 50-percent increase in infantry capabilities, with similar increases in military police, civil affairs, intelligence, and other critical skills. We have already converted more than 30,000 spaces. This will reduce the operational tempo of units and individual soldiers.

Third, soldiers are being stabilized within units for longer periods to increase combat readiness and cohesion, reduce turnover and eliminate many repetitive training requirements. With fewer soldiers and families moving, more soldiers will be available on any given day to train or to fight. This initiative, started in 2004, also transitions our Army from an individual replacement manning system to a unit focused system—to prepare soldiers to go to war as vital members of cohesive units.

Fourth, we are working to complement our operational transformation by ensuring that our business, force generation and training functions improve how we support a wartime Army and the other Services. We are divesting functions no longer relevant and reengineering business processes to increase responsiveness to the combatant commanders and to conserve resources. Other improvements include developing a joint, interdependent end-to-end logistics structure, and fostering a culture of innovation to increase institutional agility. We seek to improve effectiveness and identify efficiencies that will free human and financial resources to better support operational requirements.

Fifth, we are leveraging Army science and technology programs to accelerate maturing technologies with promising capabilities into the current force faster than expected. Many of these technologies are already being fielded to our front-line soldiers to dramatically improve their capabilities. For example, specific science and technology initiatives have improved existing capabilities to detect and neutralize mines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs), identify friendly forces in combat, develop medical technology for self-diagnosis and treatment, identify hostile fire indicators, and enhance survivability, training systems and robotics.

Our largest and most promising, science and technology investment remains the pursuit of Future Combat Systems (FCS) technologies by "spinning out" FCS capabilities into the Current Army Modular Force. When completed, FCS will add crucial capabilities to the Future Army Modular Force to achieve Department of Defense transformation goals. FCS-equipped units, operating as a system of systems, will be more deployable and survivable than our current units and will enhance joint capabilities. They will also be better suited to conduct immediate operations, over extremely long distances, with other members of the Joint Force, to produce strategic effects.

I would like to conclude, as I began, with a message about our soldiers who are protecting our National interests around the globe, serving in more than 120 countries. In the past 4 years, in joint and combined environments, soldiers helped to rescue two nations from oppression, and liberated over 50 million people. Since then, thousands have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, and many are returning for a second or third time. Our soldiers understand that this is a struggle we must win. Despite the hardships and the danger to life and limb, duty calls and our soldiers continue to answer.

Our Nation's citizens—men, women, and children from all walks of life—sleep better at night because they know that soldiers, as part of the Joint Team, defend the freedoms they so richly enjoy.

Today's soldiers are volunteers doing difficult duty against an enemy who does not value life, is afraid of liberty, and desires to crush the individual pursuit of a democratic way of life. Their dedication to this noble effort underscores their determined professionalism and tenacity. I am proud to serve with them as they place the mission first and live the Warrior Ethos.

They have made our Army the most respected institution in the United States and the world's preeminent land power. I thank them for answering the call to duty.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, General.

General Hagee.

STATEMENT OF GEN. MICHAEL W. HAGEE, USMC, COMMANDANT, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

General HAGEE. Mr. Chairman, Senator Levin, distinguished members of the committee: It is my privilege to provide an update on the state of readiness of your Marine Corps. Your marines and their equipment continue to perform extremely well, not only in Iraq and Afghanistan, but literally around the world. They continue to succeed because of the dedication and commitment of the individual marine and his or her family.

Your steadfast fiscal, legislative, and moral support remain the cornerstone of sustaining our high-quality young Americans with the equipment and training required today, and I thank you for that support.

On the subject of manning, I can report that the Marine Corps continues to experience a high rate of retention in our regular, Reserve, officer, and enlisted corps. The Center for Naval Analyses recently reported that we are retaining higher quality first-termers this year than we did last year. It also reports that we are retaining a higher percentage of first-term marines with families. These are indicators that marines believe they are accomplishing an important mission, that they are well-trained, equipped, led, and that they have the support of the American people.

Additionally, our non-end of Active service (EAS) attrition, that is, those marines who leave Active-Duty before the end of their current contracts, is at an all-time low and continues to decline.

As both the Secretary and General Schoomaker said, recruiting continues to be a challenge this year. However, thanks to significant efforts by our recruiters, we are slightly ahead of our fiscal year 2005 shipping goals for the number of recruits that we send to boot camp. I am confident that we will either meet or exceed that final goal by September 30. The quality of individuals that we are shipping to the recruit depots remains very high.

I know many of you have visited our forward-deployed marines and know from firsthand observation the professionalism, selflessness, and fortitude with which they carry out their tasks. You have also seen the wear and tear on our equipment as a result of ongoing operations. I remain in constant dialogue with our forward commanders and, although they are looking for improved technologies in some areas, they tell me that they possess the equipment they need to execute their assigned tasks.

However, because of the harsh environment and high operational tempo, we are stressing and wearing out our equipment at a very high rate. Based on the requests of the forward-deployed commanders, we have provided them with equipment in several areas above their normal authorization. This equipment has come from some of our prepositioned supplies and CONUS-based units. We have started to replace this equipment, but that effort will take time and continuing resources.

We need your help to ensure we have sufficient funding to aggressively replace and reconstitute our equipment. We have provided to the committee information necessary to identify our requirements and the planned way ahead to reconstitute the force.

We are going against an adaptive, thinking enemy, and as the threat of improvised explosive devices has evolved we have worked

aggressively to adapt our armoring program. Our Marine armor kit, a bolt-on kit for the A–2 series high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle (HMMWV), is at full production and ahead of schedule. The commander on the ground has recently increased his requirement for up-armored HMMWVs, the M–1114s, and we are pursuing the redistribution of assets in theater, an operational commander's call, and new procurement.

I thank you for your vital assistance in the fiscal year 2005 supplemental. We are executing the upkeep of the force as fast as we can obligate the funding provided. We greatly appreciate the fiscal year 2006 bridge supplemental appropriations, which will ensure we maintain a continuous funding stream as we reset your Marine Corps.

In conclusion, let me emphasize that your marines remain fully dedicated to the idea of service to this great Nation. They know they are well-equipped, well-led, well-trained, part of a great team, and have the solid backing of Congress and the American people. We fully understand that our greatest contribution is our high level of readiness to respond across the spectrum of conflict. Marines and their families greatly appreciate your continued support.

I look forward to your questions, sir.

[The prepared statement of General Hagee follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY GEN. MICHAEL W. HAGEE, USMC

Chairman Warner, Senator Levin, distinguished members of the committee; it is my honor to provide you an update on the activities and the state of readiness of your Marine Corps since I last appeared before you in February. Today, over 27,000 of your marines—regular and Reserve, of all military occupational specialties—are deployed in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere in the Central Command area of operation. Many are directly engaged in combat operations. The Marine Corps is a learning organization, and we continue, in close coordination with our joint and coalition partners, to develop new means to ensure that our marines—our most lethal weapons and our Corps' most precious assets—are properly trained, equipped, and organized to succeed in the face of an intelligent and adapting enemy. Along with our focus on effectively fighting the current fight, we continue to prepare to ensure our forces can rapidly respond to new threats and future contingencies. I would again like to thank you for your sustained fiscal and moral support of your marines and their families.

I. CURRENT OPERATIONS

Your marines are fully engaged around the world in prosecuting the global war on terror. As I highlighted to the committee in February, the Marine Corps' commitment to readiness—as measured by our personnel, training, equipment, doctrine, and organization honed over many years—has repeatedly proven its value in the wide spectrum of operations that we have been called on to execute since September 11, 2001. The importance of our Nation's ability to project power and conduct military operations over long distances for extended periods as part of a joint force has been revalidated a number of times. The Marine Corps' role as the Nation's premier expeditionary force-in-readiness, combined with our forward deployed posture, has enabled us to rapidly and effectively contribute to these joint operations. Our scalable, combined arms teams, seamlessly integrating our robust ground and aviation forces with adaptive logistics, create speed, flexibility, and agility to effectively respond to each unique emerging situation. The high state of training and quality of your marines along with our warrior ethos—highlighted by our creed that every marine is a rifleman—allows marines to thrive in the chaotic, unstable, and unpredictable environments that have always characterized warfare and that our very adaptable enemies methodically attempt to exploit.

The Marine Corps has been a key participant in several operations since the attack on our homeland. When the combatant commander needed to get ground forces into Afghanistan in late 2001, our flexibility allowed us to quickly join two Marine Expeditionary Units into Task Force 58. We then projected this force from the sea

more than 350 miles inland to secure the airfield at Camp Rhino followed by the Kandahar airfield. Then, 12 months later, we projected 70,000 marines, complete with their equipment and sustainment—a combat ready Marine Expeditionary Force—into Kuwait in less than 60 days. Once unleashed, this Marine Air Ground Task Force attacked over 500 miles inland, destroying parts of eight Iraqi Divisions, and taking portions of Baghdad—all in less than 30 days. After returning home, the Marine Corps was notified in October that we were going back in with a force of 30,000 in 4 months. Concurrently, with preparing forces for this deployment as a stability and security force involved in insurgency operations, we conducted an evacuation of noncombatants in Liberia, and deployed to Haiti within 24–36 hours. We have also provided significant forces to support continuing operation in Afghanistan that assisted in establishing a secure and stable government. As the lead for the Multi-National-Force-West, responsible for stability and security in the Al Anbar Province in Iraq, we formed a seamless combined/joint force that crushed the insurgents in the complex urban environment of Fallujah in less than 3 weeks. In addition to these examples of our expeditionary culture and our readiness, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit trained and deployed with a focus on Iraq was headed to the Middle East aboard ship when the tsunami struck in the Indian Ocean littoral. They quickly reoriented to humanitarian assistance operating in India, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka. These operations all highlight the value of our naval readiness and requirement for amphibious shipping and forward deployed forces ready to respond across the spectrum of conflict.

Since February 2005, the II Marine Expeditionary Force has completed a relief in place and transition of authority with the I Marine Expeditionary Force and is currently executing multiple security, urban combat, nation building and counter-insurgency and force protection missions with great confidence and skill, in the face of an adaptable and dangerous enemy in the heart of the Sunni Triangle. Marines are fully engaged in the training and establishment of the Iraqi Armed Forces. Highly motivated and professionally adept marines are currently training, supporting, and operating with the new Iraqi Army. We continue to aggressively match our training and equipment to the changing threat. Finally, in the Central Command area of operation, the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) is supporting Multi-National Division-South East in Iraq, providing antiterrorism training to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and conducting bilateral training with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. We expect our commitment to Operation Iraqi Freedom to remain at about 23,000 marines and sailors into 2006, with the Marine Corps Reserve Forces providing about 4,000 of these marines.

In Afghanistan, your Marine Corps continues to support Operation Enduring Freedom with an Infantry Battalion, an EA–6B squadron, and two Embedded Training Teams with the Afghan National Army. In the coming months, the Marine Corps will expand its participation in the training of the Afghan National Army as well as the training and development of the Afghan National Police. These Marine Forces are a major element of the Combined Joint Task Force assigned to defeat the remaining elements of the Taliban, al Qaeda, and al Qaeda affiliated organizations, "operationalize" and deploy the new Afghan Army, solidify and "professionalize" the Afghan National Police, and set the conditions for a successful National Assembly Election in September of this year.

In addition to these operations, our concurrent support to other regions including the Horn of Africa, the Pacific, and the Republic of Georgia exhibit the flexibility and effectiveness of your marines in prosecuting the global war on terror and solidifying relationships with foreign governments. All of these demonstrate our continued resolve to be the world's foremost expeditionary warfighting organization—always interoperable with joint, coalition, and interagency partners—creating stability in an unstable world with the world's finest warriors—United States marines.

Since February, over 31,000 marines have remained deployed around the globe fighting our Nation's battles and winning the global war on terror. The entire Marine Corps is supporting this sustained effort and no forces have been fenced. This means that many marine units in the operating forces are either deployed or training to relieve deployed units. In an effort to sustain and regenerate Marine forces for service in Iraq, and in response to lessons learned, the Marine Corps has trained and deployed a sizable number of provisional units—including cross-training artillery, tank and engineer units in security, military police, transportation, civil affairs, and foreign military training missions.

The Marine Corps continues to provide well trained marines and units to meet our operational commitments worldwide, and our overall readiness in the Iraq and Afghanistan theaters remains high. This has come at a cost though. Current operational tempo has had an impact on unit readiness. Since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom, overall unit readiness for battalion and squadron-sized units

has dropped by 14 percent. Our readiness priority remains support and sustainment of our forward deployed forces at the immediate expense of those units that have rotated out of Operation Iraqi Freedom. As a consequence, the readiness of the force not deployed has decreased. With your continued support in resetting and reconstituting our forces, we will continue to meet our forces for sustained operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and improve our readiness for any additional contingencies in the future.

II. PERSONNEL RETENTION AND RECRUITING

Despite the high operational tempo, the morale and commitment of your marines remain high. We continue to work aggressively to reduce this high tempo and still meet the requirements of the combatant commanders.

End Strength

The current end strength of 178,000 has allowed the Marine Corps to increase manning in our infantry units; create a dedicated Foreign Military Training Unit; add additional recruiters; and increase training infrastructure and other support to our operating forces. Coupled with initiatives implemented as part of the recent force structure review and our military to civilian conversions, we will place many more marines in our operating forces to reduce the tempo of operations on marines and separation from their families.

Retention

Strong retention is a complex function of leadership opportunities, sense of purpose, operations tempo, compensation, quality of life, and educational opportunities. We are currently meeting or exceeding our regular and Reserve retention goals.

Enlisted Retention

We are a young force. Maintaining a continuous flow of quality new accessions is of fundamental importance to well-balanced readiness. Over 22,000 of our Active-Duty enlisted marines are still teenagers, and 106,000 are serving on their first enlistment. We are currently ahead of our plan in meeting our fiscal year 2005 career retention goal. For first term reenlistments, we are at 98 percent of this goal with full confidence of making or exceeding mission by 1 October 2005. Of particular note is that our infantry military occupational specialties are running well ahead of last year, and we have a 98-percent first term skill match. Although the Selective Reenlistment Bonus represents just one-half of 1 percent of our military personnel budget, it remains a powerful retention tool, and we take pride in our prudent stewardship of this resource. Current Selected Marine Corps Reserve enlisted retention remains above historical averages.

Officer Retention

Overall, we continue to achieve our goals for officer retention. We are retaining experienced and high quality officers, and both regular and Reserve officer retention rates are above historical averages.

Recruiting

A successful retention effort is but one part of ensuring there is a properly trained marine in the right place at the right time. Successful recruiting is essential to replenishing the force and maintaining a high state of readiness. Fiscal year 2005 is proving to be the most difficult recruiting year we have had in 10 years. Eight months into the fiscal year 2005 recruiting year, we have shipped 102.5 percent of our fiscal year 2005 active component goal with 95.2 percent being Tier I high school graduates. The Marine Corps Reserve has also achieved its fiscal year 2005 8-month recruiting goal, shipping 100 percent of its non-prior service goal and accessessing 107 percent of its goal for prior-service marines. Officer accessions, in both the active and Reserve components, will also achieve their goals.

In enlisted contracting for next year, we are slightly behind where we had planned to be at the end of May. We have achieved 97 percent of our 8-month contracting goal, but we are optimistic we will reach 100 percent by 1 October 2005. We believe the recruiting "marketplace" will become even more challenging in fiscal year 2006. Your continued support for a strong enlistment bonus and advertising programs will be essential to meet this challenge.

Marine Corps Reserve

The morale and patriotic spirit of the Marine Reserves, their families, and their employers remains extraordinarily high. The Marine Corps Reserve continues to be fully ready and capable of rapid activation and deployment to augment and reinforce the active component of the Marine Corps as required. To date over 31,000

Reserve marines have served on Active Duty in the global war on terror. Currently, approximately 10,000 Reserve marines are on Active Duty with approximately 8,500 in cohesive Reserve ground, aviation and combat support units and almost 1,500 serving as individual augments in both marine and joint commands.

Marine For Life—Injured Support

Integral to our warrior ethos is our pride in taking care of our own. Leveraging the organizational network and strengths of the Marine for Life program, we have implemented an Injured Support program to assist our wounded marines, our sailors serving with marines, and their families. Initial operational capability for this program was achieved on 15 June 2005. The Marine Corps is committed to effecting long-term measures to advocate for, inform, and guide our wounded and their families. Strong command interest is and will continue to be a key element of this goal and our programs. Resources available to assist include our interactive Web site (www.m4l.usmc.mil). Further, we have assigned two officers to the Department of Veterans Affairs' Seamless Transition Office to liaison and develop cooperative solutions to complex problems between both organizations.

Deployment Support to Warriors

Deployment support programs and services for marines and their families are essential to mission and readiness. From lessons learned, we have developed increasingly integrated capabilities that provide a continuum of care throughout the deployment cycle. Commanders and support service providers team up for maximum visibility and impact to ensure all are aware, engaged, and capable of establishing reasonable expectations and to successfully sustain the deployment.

Pre-deployment support involves marines and their families and helps them to prepare for the emotional, financial and logistical realities of deployment. Briefs are provided that feature information on resources to assist them in problem resolution, preventive actions to provide for smooth household operation while the Marine is deployed, overview of the operational and personal security concerns, and information on communication flow to and from the unit.

To deal with individual and readiness concerns in theater, the Marine Corps employs proactive counseling services. We carefully observe our marines for signs, symptoms, and risks of untreated combat stress and provide ready and accessible resources for counseling or treatment as necessary. We have embedded through our Operational Stress Control and Readiness Program (OSCAR) mental health professionals at battalion aid stations to keep marines with low-level problems at their assigned duties and allow those with more severe conditions to immediately receive appropriate treatment.

Before marines depart theater, we have the first scheduled decompression period for military chaplains to provide our Warrior Transition Brief, which consists of various sessions developed to help marines positively transition back into their family life and communities. Through our Warrior Reintegration Program we help marines return to non-combat environments and home station communities. In this phase of support, units conduct a second decompression period and are briefed on standards of conduct, safety, alcohol and substance abuse, sexual harassment, suicide prevention, stress and anger management, and financial management. Our families also receive return and reunion information and support to ensure successful homecomings. These are but samples of our wide-ranging support of our deployment support continuum of care.

III. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Ensuring our marines are properly trained for the challenges they are likely to face is also one of our most important tasks. Deploying Marine units rotate through standardized pre-deployment training packages. Building on home station training in basic urban skills, ground units deploy to the Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Center at Twentynine Palms, California, for in-depth training in convoy operations, fire support, and small-unit coordinated assaults against defended positions, followed by a graduate-level training exercise in urban operations, including stability and support operations. In addition, ground units scheduled to deploy to Afghanistan train at the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center at Bridgeport, California. Here they focus on gaining the skills necessary to operate in demanding high-altitude environments similar to what they will experience in Afghanistan. Marine Corps aviation units continue to participate in standardized pre-deployment training in Yuma, Arizona.

The Marine Corps continuously incorporates lessons learned from the global war on terror into all our training. Our schools are using lessons learned to improve pre-deployment and in-theater training. Because Improvised Explosive Devices (IED)

generate the highest number of combat casualties, we have aggressively established robust training programs to counter this threat. This training continues through pre-deployment training and into the theater of operation. The training focuses on the integration of tactics, techniques, and procedures as well as technologies. Lessons learned are quickly incorporated into training packages.

Recognizing the importance of cultural training as a force multiplier, we have established a Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning. This center will focus all of our efforts and ensure marines are equipped with the requisite, regional, culture, and language expertise to enable them to operate successfully in any region of the world.

Because close combat will never be void of casualties, we place great emphasis on adapting changes to our first-aid training to ensure that marines can respond to the type of injuries they are most likely to face. We have improved our training in this area continually over the last few years, and we are now completing final improvements on a uniform Combat Life Saver program that will standardize enhanced first-aid skills of the average marine. This effort has ensured a greater density of personnel available to provide advanced life-saving techniques to injured marines in the highly dispersed operational environment that we face.

IV. EQUIPMENT AND MATERIEL READINESS STATUS AND INITIATIVES

Support and sustainment of our forward deployed forces remains our number one equipment and materiel readiness priority. Currently, the Marine Corps has 27 percent of our operating forces deployed in support of the global war on terror utilizing 30 percent of our ground equipment and 15 percent of our aviation assets. As the marine continues to engage in sustained combat operations, deployed forces in the field forces remain fully combat ready. This has not been without challenges that we are addressing in both the near and mid-terms to ensure that our high state of readiness is preserved. Challenges for continual reconstitution of the force to meet current operational requirements and contingencies include the accelerated wear on equipment due to both the harsh environment and the increased wartime demands, combat and other losses, and an overall need for greater density of equipment in our all units based on lessons learned.

Readiness Status

Equipment readiness for deployed forces remains high, with 100 percent equipment supply readiness and average material readiness of 95 percent for ground equipment and 76 percent for aviation units. However, continued ground combat operations are starting to take a toll on equipment availability and unit readiness ratings. The corresponding ground equipment readiness rates for units in the United States average 81 percent. The average readiness rate for aviation units remaining in garrison is currently 72 percent. We address our response to this issue in the Reconstitution and Ground Equipment Density and Mid-Term Readiness paragraphs below.

Theater Readiness Initiatives

The Marine Corps has initiated several ongoing initiatives to improve support to deployed forces and ensure they remain at a high level of readiness, including: (1) establishment of a Forward In Stores (FIS) equipment pool in theater to reduce customer wait time; (2) outsourcing of preventative maintenance to reduce the burden on our mechanics and allow them to focus on corrective maintenance; (3) creation of a limited aircraft depot maintenance capability; (4) establishment of a robust equipment rotation plan; and (5) expanded partnering efforts with the Army to leverage capabilities already established in theater for maintenance on 25 different weapon systems. These actions will reduce the overall logistics footprint and the demand on the intra theater lift/distribution requirements.

Reconstitution and Ground Equipment Density

Over 5,300 major pieces of equipment have been either destroyed or degraded to the point that they must be rebuilt resulting in a corresponding increase in maintenance work. As example of the effect of the harsh desert environment and the increased usage on our equipment, HMMWVs which have an estimated useful life of 13 years, need to be replaced after 2 years of operating in Iraq. This accelerated wear and tear requires increased maintenance actions and greater non-availability of assets. In addition, the Marine Corps has deployed forces to Iraq and Afghanistan with the equipment necessary for the warfighter to carry out the mission. This has resulted in expanded equipment density lists for these units beyond what they are normally equipped and what we had planned and procured for them, particularly with respect to communications and electronics gear, motor transport support, and

crew-served weapons. Consequently, non-deployed units, from whom we have filled out our deployed units, are experiencing shortages. We have validated that sustained operations over a widely dispersed geographic area require more materiel then we had anticipated. Based on these lessons learned and a rigorous assessment, we intend to equip all of our units with expanded equipment density lists, both to train as we intend to fight and to be ready for current and future operations.

We have taken the following actions to sustain operations and ensure readiness of our deployed units in theater and those training to replace them: (1) we are cross-leveling and redistributing assets across the Marine Corps to ensure that all gear is effectively allocated, (2) we are employing our war Reserve and pre-positioned stocks including those in Norway and aboard our Maritime Prepositioning Ships, and (3) we are utilizing assets in our training equipment allowances. Through the recently approved fiscal year 2005 supplemental funding, we are currently initiating procurement of materiel and stocks to reset the force that will also assist in improving the readiness of our non-deployed units. We will fully utilize future funding initiatives to ensure constant reconstitution of our forces for sustained operations and our readiness for future contingencies, including expanding the equipment density of all our units based on lessons learned.

Additional critical elements of our near-term readiness efforts in meeting operational requirements include:

Armor

Since the beginning of this conflict and as the threat against our forces has evolved, improvements in armor to protect our marines and sailors have been an imperative in our readiness efforts. Our goal has been, and remains, to provide the best level of protection possible to 100 percent of in-theater vehicles. Our efforts have evolved through various "generations" based primarily on lessons learned in theater and a more robust and sophisticated technology base at home.

Vehicle Armor History

Before I Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) relieved the 82nd Airborne in the Al Anbar province in March 2004, the Marine Corps provided first generation armor components for 100 percent of the deploying force's 3,049 vehicles within 10 weeks of receipt of tasking. This "Level 3" armor protection consisted of commercial off-the-shelf combination of appliqué panels, 3/16″ "L" shaped steel doors, and ballistic blankets.

In response to a thinking, adaptive enemy that increased the lethality of Improvised Explosive Devices, we sought a more robust armoring solution for our HMMWVs and other tactical vehicles. We began fielding of "zonal" armor to upgrade all armor kits to a second generation consisting of the depot built 3/8″ rolled homogeneous armor. In all, more than 4,100 vehicles have been equipped with upgraded "Level 2" 3/8″ armored L shaped doors, flanks, underbody, tailgates, rear cab plates, ballistic glass, and gunner shields. Additionally in a joint effort with the Army, the Marine Corps received a Multi-National Corps-Iraq distribution of 200 Add-on Armor kits and 529 up-armored HMMWV (M1114/M1116) from theater level assets, in addition to the 37 export model up-armored HMMWVs received earlier.

As the threat continued to evolve and change, particularly with respect to IEDs, which became increasingly sophisticated and more powerful, it became clear that additional improvements to the "zonal" armor were necessary. For non-M1114 variant HMMWVs, this 3rd generation armor consists of integrated kits, known as Marine Armor Kits (MAK). The MAK system is a modular, bolt-on system that can be installed by marines at the unit level. MAK systems offer significantly improved protection against the most prevalent threats. Because the MAK is kit armor, it is classified as "Level 2" armor, however, it should be noted that it provides considerably greater protection than the second generation "zonal" armor, particularly when improved underbody armor is included.

Vehicle Armor Installation

Currently, installation of MAK systems on HMMWVs is occurring at Camp Al Taqaddum, Iraq. As of 19 June 2005, we have completed installation on 699 HMMWVs out of 1695 we have scheduled; the requirement will be completed by December 2005. Similarly, for our MTVR 7-ton trucks, we have developed what is known as the MTVR Armor System (MAS). We have commenced the installation process for 900 MTVRs, but are not nearly as far along. The MTVR, with its current suite of armor, however, is very well suited for the current IED threat. Finally, we have just initiated a buy of ballistic glass inserts for use on vehicles that have passengers not entirely encased in armor. This initiative will also include eventual installation of ballistic glass deflective plates for turret gunners that are currently in the design and test stage.

Future Armor Requirements

The Marine Corps is conducting an expeditionary armored force capability needs assessment as well as developing a ground mobility integration plan to ensure the future Marine Air-Ground Task Force is able to perform mounted armored combat operations across the spectrum of military operations. We will continue to assess our armored vehicle requirements for those forces in theater and the entire Marine Corps.

IED Countermeasures

Vehicle armor is only one of the aspects of countering this continually evolving, lethal threat; electronic countermeasures are another. We cannot address this topic to any degree of depth in an unclassified document, but we are constantly looking for innovations that will jam, detect, or pre-detonate these devices as they continue to evolve. We are also fully integrated into the Joint IED Task Force's efforts, and are engaged with them at every level. We are prepared to speak in closed session on this topic.

The Office of Naval Research has established a parallel, but longer term effort, titled the "Manhattan Project," into basic research to address the challenge presented by IEDs. This effort significantly expands understanding into the underlying basic phenomenology involved in the ability to detect, defeat, and destroy IEDs at range and speed. This includes explosives, triggering devices, and the kill chain associated with the IED threat. Long-term basic and applied research will be conducted to address the foundations of current and future IED problems. The "Manhattan Project" provides a sustained multi-disciplinary investment in basic research. It is a deliberate effort that engages the entire academic and scientific research community as well.

Extremity Body Armor

Over the past few months, the Marine Corps Warfighting Lab and Systems Command have been working with the Naval Research Lab to develop the next generation of body armor. Casualty data and feedback from medical personnel show that as much as 70 percent of shrapnel wounds are from small fragments traveling at subsonic speeds. We believe this information may lead to much lighter body armor. The biggest challenge with developing an effective body armor system in a desert environment is the heat. We are experimenting with different materials that can be worn under the armor that allow for better ventilation and cooling.

Cupola Protective Ensemble (CPE)

In conjunction with the Joint IED Task Force, the Marine Corps is conducting an operational assessment of the Cupola Protective Ensemble (CPE). This bomb suit is modified for wear by turret gunners, who are more exposed to shrapnel and blast from IEDs and require additional protection. The suit is worn over the existing OTV and SAPI plates and weighs about 40 pounds. It comes with a vest that incorporates cooled water pumped through it from a chiller that runs off vehicle power.

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Efforts

In June 2004, the Navy conducted an out-of-cycle SBIR effort to seek innovative solutions from small businesses to address the threats presented by IEDs, RPGs, and Rocket/Mortars. The goal of this effort was to find "out-of-the-box" technologies for rapid development and deployment into theater. ONR funded eleven proposals as SBIR Phase I efforts. Two of the 11 IED Phase I efforts have been awarded additional funds for Phase II efforts. ONR is in the process of conducting technical reviews of the remaining efforts for additional Phase II funding.

Meeting Urgent Operational Requirements

A critical factor for both Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom in ensuring our marines were as adequately equipped as possible is the Urgent Universal Needs Statement (UUNS) process that we initiated in 2002. This process has provided a way for the leaders and members of our operating forces to identify and forward new requirements for weapons and gear up the chain of command for quick review and approval—most in less than 90 days. Upon approval by the Marine Corps Requirements Oversight Council, the Marine Corps and the Department of the Navy have realigned funds as necessary within permitted reprogramming thresholds. When required by reprogramming authority rules, we have forwarded requests that exceed the established reprogramming thresholds to Congress for approval. The sources for these internal reprogramming actions have been our investment accounts. 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. Through this process we have acquired more

than 200,000 pieces of essential warfighting equipment that have been provided to the operational commanders. Some examples are:

- Vehicle hardening initiatives and IED Jammers noted in the armor section above.
- Numerous types of weapons sights
  - Advanced Combat Optic Gunsights (ACOG)
  - Thermal Weapons Sights
- Family of Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) equipment including unmanned robotics and blast suits
- Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV)—Dragon Eye and Scan Eagle
- Hardened Engineer Vehicles—13 Cougar vehicles delivered with 14 pending
- Radios: Personal Role Radios, PRC–148, PRC–117F, and Tropo Satellite Support Radios
- Unit Operations Centers
- Night Vision Devices
- Dust abatement chemicals and sprayer systems
- Backscatter X-Ray machines
- Blue Force Tracker

As noted, reprogrammings deferred deliveries or delayed the execution of other approved procurement programs. Affected Marine Corps programs include personal gear and weaponry, vehicles, command and control systems, communications, and tactical computers. Marine Corps initiatives within the Navy budget affected by reprogramming included ships, naval weapons systems, and aircraft replacements/modifications that marines man or that directly support us.

V. MID-TERM READINESS

In addition, key acquisition programs will ensure our readiness in the mid-term, including:

MV–22 Osprey

Although event driven, we expect the MV–22 Operational Evaluation to finish late summer. The program is scheduled for a Full Rate Production decision this September. This aircraft will start to replace the 40-year-old CH–46 starting in fiscal year 2007. In addition to increasing the safety of air-transported forces, it will significantly increase our operational and tactical flexibility and adaptability. We thank Congress for its strong support of this critical capability. We ask for your continued support to ensure that production is maintained at an efficient and cost-effective rate to ensure the standup of MV–22 squadrons without lapse in readiness and the tactical mobility of our forces.

Heavy Lift Replacement (HLR)

As the MV–22 completes development and begins to be fielded, the replacement for our aging CH–53E aircraft is our next aviation acquisition priority. The lift capacity of our CH–53E helicopters has been diminishing with age, while the cost of maintaining them continues to climb. By 2011, we will be forced to start an expensive process of inducting our CH–53E helicopters into our depots for major repairs. A heavy lift capability is the linchpin for future joint naval operations, Seabasing, and expeditionary warfare. The process needs to start now if we are to have a suitable replacement and maintain our essential heavy lift capability. This replacement will provide required capabilities, not resident in any other platform, to insert and sustain a credible sea-based force. The HLR will transport 27,000 pounds to distances of 110 nautical miles, the equivalent of two armored High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles per sortie or three independent sustainment loads. This reliable, cost-effective heavy lift replacement for the CH–53E will address critical challenges in maintainability, reliability, and affordability found in present-day operations supporting the global war on terror.

H–1 (AH–1Z/UH–1Y)

The H–1 Upgrade Program is a key modernization effort designed to resolve existing safety deficiencies and enhance operational effectiveness of both the AH–1W and the UH–1N. Additionally, the commonality gained between the AH–1Z and UH–1Y (84 percent) will significantly reduce life-cycle costs and logistical footprint, while increasing the maintainability and deployability of both aircraft. In March 2005, the program entered low-rate initial production (LRIP) II. Due to aircraft attrition in operations supporting the global war on terror, funding was approved for a 'build-new' strategy for the UH–1Y in April 2005 and is currently being pursued for the

AH–1Z, in order to prevent inventory shortfalls. Operational test and evaluation is planned to begin in October 2005.

VIII. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, let me emphasize that your marines are fully dedicated to whatever is required to protect this Nation. We will continue to ensure that we are an agile force, adapting and shaping ourselves to enhance our capabilities to win the global war on terror and respond to the 21st century environment. The Marine Corps fully understands that our greatest contribution to the Nation is our high-level of readiness—across the spectrum of conflict. With your continued support, we will ensure that your marines, our equipment, our training, and our organization remain ready for any potential contingency. Marines and their families greatly appreciate the unwavering support of Congress and the solid backing of the American people that is critical to maintaining our high level of success.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, General, and I thank all witnesses for their opening comments.

We will start a 6-minute round of questioning. I am going to ask of our uniformed people each the same question, and I will ask General Myers to lead off in response to my question. I think all of us have in our minds the question what is at the root cause of the falloff in recruitment. You pointed out, General Hagee, recruiting was a challenge. I think the Chief of Staff of the Army was a little more specific. Secretaries Chu and Abell addressed it.

I would like to hear and have on our record exactly what the uniformed people believe is the cause for the difficulty today that we are encountering, primarily in recruiting and secondarily, in other areas where there is a problem with retention. General Myers, would you lead off and just articulate it?

General MYERS. You bet. I would be pleased to do that, Mr. Chairman. In the area of retention, I am not aware that we have retention issues anywhere, essentially.

Chairman WARNER. The Guard and Reserve?

General MYERS. In the Reserve components, both Guard and Reserve, attrition is the lowest it has ever been, and the retention is very high, particularly for those that have been called, mobilized, and are in the field today. If you go to most Reserve units, the ones that are most disappointed are the ones that have not been called to the fight. That is just a fact.

On recruiting, I do not think any of us have the answers. My understanding of it is that there is a little more hesitancy on the part of those who might recommend a military career, or serving some time in the military, from teachers and high school counselors, parents, aunts and uncles, probably due to what is going on in the world today and the fact that the military is on the front line of protecting this country. I think we need to work on those issues, as we have talked about. Actually a week ago we talked about this as well.

I think what we need to remember is we are a Nation at war. As everybody on this panel, I think, has said, the stakes are extremely high. As we have seen every year since the declaration of our independence, there have been Americans that have come forward to defend that freedom and defend our freedoms, and we just need everybody's help to do that. I think all the panel members have said that.

I think the economy probably has some effect. The robustness of the U.S. economy has some effect on recruiting as well, and with that, I think I will let the other panel members speak.

Chairman WARNER. General Schoomaker?

General SCHOOMAKER. Sir, first of all I agree with what the chairman has said. I believe that this generation wants to serve, and wants to join. I believe we have a challenge with the people that influence this generation—their parents, their teachers, their coaches, and others in their community. I believe that we require continued call to service by people that can influence those influencers about the importance of service.

That is just my opinion. What I would like to do is cite a couple facts as they pertain to the Army. First of all, we are trying to grow our Army, because you have authorized us to grow an additional 30,000. We have set our goals higher. To put it in perspective, the United States Army, Active, Guard, and Reserve, is recruiting every year more than 165,000 new soldiers. That is more than the Air Force, the Navy, and the Marine Corps recruit together. Or, said another way, we are trying to recruit the entire enlisted force of the United States Marine Corps every year, not just what they are recruiting, but their entire force. It is a big goal and a big challenge.

I agree with the chairman that, from the Army's perspective, it is a fact that we do not have a retention problem today. Right now, we are at 106 percent of our goal in the Active Force, 104 percent of our goal in the U.S. Army Reserve, and 104 percent of our goal in the Army National Guard in terms of retention. I think this is an indicator that those who have joined the Army find an institution with values, where they can trust the people on their right and left, where they are involved in something bigger than themselves, and where they find value in service.

We do not have a division or organization in our Army today that is not making its retention goal, and I think that says a lot.

The other fact that I will tell you: If you take a look at the demographics of our population, 17 to 24 years old, we are all competing with industry and everybody else for about 30 percent of the males between 17 and 24. That is about the number who are eligible to meet the quality standards of our Armed Forces. That says something about our education system. It has to do with other areas of values that you can apply.

I think we have work to do, and that is why I say this is just not the Armed Forces' challenge. This is the Nation's challenge, to provide this force.

The last thing I will say: As you well know, those of us up here are old enough to have served in a time when this force was broken. That was in the early 1970s. We know what a broken force looks like, and this force is not broken. This force is the best force in my 36 years that I can ever remember. It certainly is better than in my father's 32 years of service in the Army, so I just stand on that.

Chairman WARNER. I share that view, General. I remember so well when you and I first met in the context of your being appointed and preparing for the advise and consent procedure of the Senate. You recounted your early years right there in the closing

period of Vietnam and the struggles that we had with that force, which was largely a draft-produced force. I remember vividly your stories that you told me. You do have a corporate memory and a history that reaches well back into the draft era and into the All-Volunteer Force, and I respect greatly your views.

General Hagee.

General HAGEE. Sir, I would like to align myself with the chairman and the Chief of Staff of the Army and say just a couple of words about the Marine Corps. Like the Army, our retention is very high. Not only is our retention high, but, as I mentioned in my opening statement, the quality of individual marine that we are retaining is higher than it was, higher than it has been, over the last couple of years. We are retaining families, marines who are married with families, at a higher rate, which all indicates to me that these marines feel very confident in what they are doing, how they are trained, how they are led, and the quality of life that we, including this committee, have been able to provide to them.

As far as recruiting is concerned, I would like to add one other factor that I think is out there besides the influencers. We have noticed the same thing. A recruiter today spends about 12 hours for each individual recruited. Before September 11, they were spending about 4 hours for each individual recruited, and that increase is from primarily talking with the influencers today.

Even before September 11, the propensity for individuals to join the Armed Forces was headed down. I think that is primarily because parents, even grandparents today, are not that familiar with the Armed Forces. In many cases, young Americans do not even consider joining the armed services. It is really up to us, all of us, to talk about the ideal of service and the necessity to join the Armed Forces.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, General. I want to quickly get in—yes, General Myers; you wished to make an additional point?

General MYERS. Yes, one quick anecdote. We talk about recruiting, and we are primarily talking, of course, about enlisted recruiting. I think that's what we normally have our statistics for. I had the privilege of being at West Point for the graduation ceremony this year and, like all academies, the classes that graduated this year are the September 11 classes. They came in before September 11. It happened a few months after they arrived, and then this Nation went to war. They have been at school while we are at war, and they have been reminded from time to time that some of their classmates have been wounded or lost their lives in this conflict.

Yet they stayed, and they graduated. As you shake their hands as they come across the stage, 911 of them at West Point this year, what great men and women. If I were just to tag onto General Schoomaker's remarks, if you want to join an organization that is well led by those people we saw walk across that stage at West Point—and the same thing happened at Annapolis and the same thing happened at Colorado Springs—this is a well-led organization. When I say well-led, I am talking about people who actually do the leading in the field. It is well led. They are motivated. There is not a better profession or a more respected profession or a more noble cause.

Chairman WARNER. I thank you, General.

I want to finish my time with this question to Dr. Chu and Mr. Abell. The uniformed side has identified, the word that the Commandant used, the "influencers." The Chief of Staff of the Army said, it is that traditional infrastructure, the family, the counselors at high school and so forth. Therein rests the problem with regard to recruiting.

What specifically are you planning to aim at that group to try and regain once again their confidence, so that confidence can be transmitted to that young person that they are working with? Dr. Chu?

Dr. CHU. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As General Hagee said, we have noticed this as a trend for some time. It antedates September 11. We have been working hard to explain through various media, including advertising, to influencers the value of military service. You may have seen some of these vignettes that are very compelling. They show parents, coaches, teachers, case histories, life stories of individuals who have chosen a period of military service, whether that is brief, or whether that is Active or Reserve, and their later civilian careers and how those civil careers have benefited from the period of military service.

We think this is a very important message to give to the parents and the teachers and advisers of America: Your young person is going to return with stronger values, better preparation for life, after this period of military service, whether it is 3 years or 30 years.

Our challenge is to get that word out and to make that case to the Nation's parents so they see this as a positive and attractive choice for the young people. As Mr. Abell said, I think we can sometimes be too much tuned to today's news story, not to the larger picture here.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

Secretary Abell.

Mr. ABELL. Yes, sir. This is part of the challenge that we face that is really sort of less tangible. We have to get to these influencers and have them understand the nobility and the true nature of the service and the organizations that their young men and women will join. Like the President's speech the other night, in which he appealed to the American people. We need those kinds of things. We need you and your colleagues to appeal to the American people and have them understand that service is a good thing, and the benefits of it, and that the young men and women who do serve if they do not decide to stay with us, return to their communities better citizens than when they joined us.

We looked at the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) graduations this year and tried to make sure that we had influential speakers at those graduation ceremonies, again, to inspire the newly commissioned officers, but also to talk to the communities—they are on the college campuses, of course—so that the graduation ceremony, the commissioning ceremony, the address was not delivered by the lieutenant colonel or colonel who had been their teacher and mentor for 4 years, but by someone who had just come from the fields of Afghanistan or Iraq and could talk to them about what they saw and what they experienced.

Chairman WARNER. Mr. Secretary, I am running over my time.

Mr. ABELL. Okay, sir.

Chairman WARNER. I thank you, and hopefully in the course of the dialogue you can finish up.

Senator Levin.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Schoomaker, in your testimony you indicated that one of the causes for the recruiting shortfalls that we have in the Army, despite extraordinary efforts, has been, I think in your words, the "war-induced strain" on our families and on our troops. Can you expand on that?

General SCHOOMAKER. I was trying to recognize two things. First of all, the fact that there is a strain because of the extraordinary pressures as a result of war, because war is a traumatic experience not only for those that are on the battlefield, but also for the families that are left behind, with the stresses and strains and worries and anxieties that exist and with the absence of that family member from normal life, from the children that are going to school, and from the spouse that is left behind to deal with all of the pressures that exist.

Many a family has experienced it many times, and I have experienced it as a child with my father in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, my senior year in high school with my father in Vietnam. This is a reality of military service—which by the way—there are other professions that also have these kinds of separations, but they do not have the pressures of the unknown and the dangers that exist when we are at war.

That is primarily what I was talking about. I also was saying, though, that the Army is not the only one bearing this burden. We have other services that are bearing the burden. We have other aspects of government and civil society that are bearing the burdens of this war.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you.

We learned this morning that the Active-Duty Army exceeded its June recruiting goal by more than 500 enlistees, and that is good news. The Army recently began accepting more non-high school graduates and more recruits scoring in category IV on the standardized aptitude tests. Was there a larger percentage of non-high school graduates as a percentage in the June recruiting class than there was in previous ones?

General SCHOOMAKER. Sir, I do not know, and I will have to give you the specific answer for the record. But I would like to make clear that the DOD standard for recruiting is that less than 4 percent of the total can be in the lowest acceptable aptitude category. Greater than 60 percent have to be in the upper category and greater than 90 percent have to be high school graduates.

We are far exceeding—our standard right now—our attainment right now is greater than 73 percent against that 60 percent goal.

[The information referred to follows:]

During the month of June, the Army accessed 10.9 percent of its year-to-date non-prior service soldiers who were non-high school diploma graduates or 1.4 percent of the total year-to-date non-prior service accessions. These soldiers have a General Education Development (GED) certificate and are considered high school graduates. There was no "surge" in June for non-high school diploma accessions. Quality marks are an annual requirement and we continue to maintain the highest quality of soldiers possible.

Senator LEVIN. There was a change, was there not, in terms of a larger percentage within that range of non-high school graduates being accepted?

General SCHOOMAKER. I will have to give you the answer for this month.

Senator LEVIN. No, not for the month.

General SCHOOMAKER. But I must remind you that it is measured against an annual goal.

Senator LEVIN. Right, I understand.

General SCHOOMAKER. So there may be months where you have a change in percentage, but we are not going to exceed it in terms of the year. I believe, quite frankly, that we have not broken any of those.

Senator LEVIN. No, I am confident of that. I am sure you are still within the range. My question was, was there a change recently where you were accepting more non-high school graduates?

General SCHOOMAKER. We have not changed the standard.

Senator LEVIN. Not the standard, but in terms of the percentage that had been accepted.

General SCHOOMAKER. I will have to give you that for the record.

Senator LEVIN. All right.

[The information referred to follows:]

See response above.

General Schoomaker, the press reports indicate that the Army is considering some unique recruiting incentives tailored to the current recruiting environment. Can you tell us what kind of new recruiting incentives that the Army is considering?

General SCHOOMAKER. We have asked for a variety of changes in authorization caps, for instance, in enlistment bonuses. We have raised the education dollar limits. We have targeted retention goals. We have some ideas in terms of home mortgage incentives for people, and for education incentives.

Dr. Chu, I will have to defer to you.

Senator LEVIN. Just briefly, if you would, do some of these proposals require legislative authorization?

General SCHOOMAKER. I believe they do.

Senator LEVIN. Which ones would require legislative authorization? Just give us an example?

General SCHOOMAKER. Raising the cap for an enlistment bonus. I think we are capped now at $20,000.

Dr. CHU. Yes, sir. The current cap on the enlistment bonus is $20,000. The House bill has raised it to $30,000. Some have talked about a higher number, which obviously would have its attractions.

Senator LEVIN. We are already considering those. I am talking about new ones other than the ones already under consideration.

General SCHOOMAKER. The Secretary of the Army has a proposal that is up for consideration at the DOD on a home mortgage incentive, as an example.

Senator LEVIN. We have increased the Army's and the Marines' end strength. Is it likely that we are going to be able to meet those new end strengths that we have authorized? I look to both of you, General Schoomaker first. The Army's new authorized end strength

is 512,000. We have approved an increase to 522,000. Is it likely we will be able to meet that, given recruiting challenges?

General SCHOOMAKER. I do not believe you have approved 522,000 yet. I think we have 502,000 for this year, 512,000 by next year, and then we have actually until 2009 for the additional increase.

Senator LEVIN. Let us take the 512,000. Is it likely we can meet the 512,000?

General SCHOOMAKER. We have to meet these recruiting goals.

Senator LEVIN. My time is up. I have one last question that has to do with retention issues and the high level of deployments we have seen—in the Army, sometimes two and three times soldiers being deployed, and some marines have completed their third combat tour in the last 4 years. In both the Army and Marine Corps, can we sustain the current OPTEMPO and still not have a problem in terms of reenlistments? Just give a quick answer. In your judgment does that threaten our good reenlistment numbers?

General SCHOOMAKER. The quick answer is from the Army's perspective, we have had one unit that we have turned around quickly with just less than a year to return to Iraq. So to the best of my knowledge we do not have one flag—I am talking about a unit now—that we have turned around for a third time.

We now have two units for sure that we have turned around for their second tour, Third Infantry Division, Third Armored Cavalry Regiment. We have some, like the 82nd in small portions, that we have used for short periods of time in and out, during the elections for instance.

Senator LEVIN. Do you see any challenge to reenlistments based on these high levels of deployments?

General SCHOOMAKER. Of course, over time that would be an increased challenge. That's why we came to you and why our transformation is so important, in order to increase the number of deployable units, because that is what increases the dwell time. We now are averaging almost 20 months dwell. That is only 4 months short of our goal of 2 years dwell between deployments.

Senator LEVIN. Okay, thank you.

General Hagee, do you have a quick answer?

General HAGEE. In the short term, no, sir. In the mid-term, we could, and that is why we are working so aggressively to bring that turnaround time down.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you all.

Chairman WARNER. Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the witnesses. I share their view wholeheartedly about the outstanding quality and patriotism and work that the men and women in our military are performing and the pride that we all feel in them.

Just as an aside, General Myers, you brought up these wonderful young men and women who just graduated from West Point in 2005. Do you know that applications for the service academies are down, to all three service academies, rather significantly?

Dr. CHU. If I could address that, Senator.

Senator MCCAIN. I asked General Myers since he brought up the subject of West Point.

General MYERS. The only one I knew about was based on a comment I got from the Superintendent of West Point, but I thought he said that the applications remained very strong, higher than the year before.

Senator MCCAIN. You might check into it. The applications are down.

I am sure that many of you, particularly General Hagee and General Schoomaker, know General Barry McCaffrey, who just returned from an extended trip to Iraq, where he received logistics and other assistance from DOD. I was very gratified by his overall assessment of the progress of the war and comforted to some degree, because he and others I have talked to have said, as he said, "I believe President Bush showed great political and moral courage knocking down the sanctuaries of both Afghanistan and Iraq. Now we have the right forces in Iraq, superb leadership, growing traction of the ISF, a developing Iraqi-led political strategy, and an Iraqi economy that is struggling off its knees. I think that is all very good news."

He also says: "We are also in a race against time. The U.S. Army and Marines are too undermanned and underresourced to sustain this security policy beyond next fall. They are starting to unravel. Congress is in denial and must act. In addition, the American people are losing faith in the statements of our Defense Department leadership. Support for the war is plummeting along with Active-Duty and National Guard recruiting."

General Hagee, do you disagree with General McCaffrey's assessment, "The U.S. Army and Marines are too undermanned and too underresourced to sustain this security policy beyond next fall"?

General HAGEE. I strongly disagree that the—and I can only address the marines there in the Al-Anbar Province—that they are starting to unravel. I would say that in fact it is just the other way. When I go over there and I talk with those marines, they are very confident that they are accomplishing the mission.

Senator MCCAIN. That is not what he said, General Hagee. I will quote it again, and I commend this article for your reading. He said they are "undermanned and underresourced to sustain this security policy beyond next fall," referring to the rotations and the strain on the military resources we have. He was specifically speaking of the Army and Marine Corps.

Do you have sufficient forces indefinitely to maintain the kind of rotation with the size force you have?

General HAGEE. We have sufficient forces to go through next fall. I am not sure I would say indefinitely at this current OPSTEMPO, sir, but talking with the commander on the ground, which I did just this morning, he is very satisfied with the forces and the equipment that he has on the ground today.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you. So there are no problems really?

General HAGEE. Sir, there are always challenges when we are at war, but as far as the number of troops and the equipment they have, he is satisfied with what he has today.

Senator MCCAIN. Then why is it, General, that after going into Fallujah in one of the toughest battles that the marines have ever fought, that now we are fighting again in Fallujah?

General HAGEE. Sir, we are not fighting in Fallujah the way we did.

Senator MCCAIN. No, we are not, but they are back there, and they are inflicting casualties on American forces, and we see a renewal of conflict there. My point is that we go in and we do a magnificent job, then we have to withdraw because there are responsibilities and challenges in other parts of Iraq, which goes back to the fundamental disagreement that many of us have about the ability to win and hold and expand, rather than strike, win, and leave. We are sustaining casualties in Fallujah as we speak.

General HAGEE. Sir, we are—true. We are fighting an insurgency, an adaptive enemy, it is not a squad versus squad, or a platoon versus platoon. There are marines, soldiers, and Iraqi security forces in Fallujah taking on that insurgency.

Having visited Fallujah before the battle last November, and having visited it twice since, I can tell you that the security situation there is much better than it was in October and is constantly improving. Also, the economy is starting to grow there. The people who are living in Fallujah are starting to give us intelligence and information, because they do not want the insurgents to come back.

Senator MCCAIN. Dr. Chu, there are many of us that are very concerned about retention and recruiting, and I think again that we are hearing from too many people in the field, from too many recruiters, from too many people who are telling me that they are not staying because of the overstress on themselves and their families.

We need input as to what Congress can do to provide further incentives for recruitment and retention both. The Department of Defense authorization bill will be on the floor within a couple of weeks. We would like to have some specific recommendations, or I would like to have some specific recommendations, between now and when the bill goes to the floor.

If we have received enough recommendations to provide incentives and all of the options we are considering, home mortgages, whatever it is, and we do not need to do it, that is fine, then do not submit it. If you think we do, we would like to have some guidance from the DOD as to how we can best ensure that we retain and recruit the highest quality men and women.

Do you have any specific proposals that you would be willing to send over in the next couple of weeks for us?

Dr. CHU. I would be delighted to, sir. Let me take this opportunity——

Senator MCCAIN. I cannot hear you very well.

Dr. CHU. Sorry. I would be delighted to, sir. Let me take this opportunity to reiterate our support for several things already on the table: a higher enlistment bonus, per the House mark, or perhaps even greater; second, which I believe you are acting on favorably, a critical skills retention bonus for the Reserves, which we do not have today; third, which I know you are supporting, an affiliation bonus when someone leaves Active service, to give them an incentive, which really does not exist in any meaningful way today, to consider joining a selected Reserve unit. Those are three very important changes that we would like to see.

Fourth, an increase in the ceiling on hardship duty pay, which is in the President's original request. Fifth, as is in the House mark, a notion the Army has pioneered, which is used extensively in civil life, that when you refer successfully a candidate for service that you get some kind of modest reward. It is recognition as much as anything else, but there is also something tangible in there.

We would be glad to submit that for you, sir, and add those things that have, as you implied with your question, come up since our original request.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, sir. I think it would be very helpful to us and I would be—I cannot ever speak for all of my colleagues, but I know I can reflect the sentiment of my colleagues. We would be eager to do whatever is necessary and it would be helpful to us to have your specific recommendations.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General SCHOOMAKER. Mr. Chairman, could I add? Sorry to interrupt. Could I add to that—first of all, you have been very helpful in the kinds of things that Dr. Chu has talked about in the past. I tried to make the point earlier, I think that it is very important that you and your colleagues use your considerable influence to explain to the American people and to those that are influencers out there how important it is for our young people to serve this Nation at a time like this.

I know you have been doing that, and I would just encourage you to continue to help lead our people in that direction.

Senator MCCAIN. Some of us do that every day, General. Thank you very much. Thank you for the encouragement, and I was very pleased at the President's emphasis on that in his speech at Fort Bragg.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. I simply say that I have been privileged to know this fine Senator for many, many years, prior to and during his service in the Navy, and he has at every opportunity done precisely what you recommend. He is too modest to recognize it.

Dr. Chu, have you had adequate time to respond to all the questions that have been asked here recently? I saw one time you wanted to add something?

Dr. CHU. Yes, sir, thank you. I did want to add something on this issue of applications to the academies. What we had, sir, was a surge post-September 11, and a return to pre-September 11 levels. There was no change, interestingly enough, in the number of applicants that the academy superintendents would call qualified. Now, that is a mix of several factors.

I am pleased, again consistent with what General Myers reported, that there remains a strong desire of Americans, young Americans, to serve, and that continues in terms of applications to the academies.

Chairman WARNER. In follow-up on Senator McCain's request, it is important that your staff, and majority and minority staff of the committee, quickly determine whether our bill as it is going to be proposed on the floor has in it now, or would have by virtue of amendments, those matters that you have raised today and that we will continue to discuss here. We need to do that very promptly.

Dr. CHU. Thank you, sir. We look forward to it.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Reed.

Senator REED. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First let me welcome the young soldiers that are here, and thank them for their service and their sacrifice on behalf of the country and the Army. Thank you very much.

General Schoomaker, what is your recruiting goal for next month?

General SCHOOMAKER. Can I give it to you for the record? I do not know it off the top of my head.

[The information referred to follows:]

In terms of achieving the annual recruiting goal of 80,000 accessions, the Army would have to access 32,879 soldiers as of the end of June 2005.

Senator REED. Fine, sir.

I guess, doing the math, though, it would be considerably larger than the recruiting goal you had this month, since, I think, to meet your annual goal you have to recruit about 11,000 inductees a month from now until the end of the fiscal year.

General SCHOOMAKER. You are correct. The trend has to go up. We have to make up for what we failed to access during the spring. First of all, I think you know that this is seasonal and that the spring time frame has always been difficult. We did not meet the goals that we set in the spring, even though those goals were set lower than they would be set during the summer period. We will have to elevate our goals, and that is why I am not quite sure exactly.

Chairman WARNER. Let us take a moment, Senator. I think it is important. That answer must be here in the room. Have you got it now to his first question?

General SCHOOMAKER. The June goal was 7,450 Active-Duty.

Senator REED. What will be the July goal?

General SCHOOMAKER. What will the July goal be?

I am sorry, this is the July goal, 7,450.

Senator REED. My rough math is even if you recruit 7,000 soldiers, you will still be short since—and I might be wrong—you need to recruit about 11,000 soldiers a month for the next 3 months until the end of the fiscal year.

General SCHOOMAKER. This is Active. We have July, August, and September left in the year.

Senator REED. Let me ask it another way. How many soldiers do you need to recruit before the end of this year to meet your yearly goal?

General SCHOOMAKER. Let me give the specific numbers to you for the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

In terms of achieving the annual recruiting goal of 80,000 accessions, the Army would have to access 32,879 soldiers as of the end of June 2005.

Senator REED. I appreciate that, sir.

General SCHOOMAKER. We are at about 84 percent of our goal right now.

Senator REED. Let me echo the chairman's, I think, instruction, which is that if we could get those numbers today or tomorrow it would be very useful.

General SCHOOMAKER. I will get them to you before the end of the hearing.

Senator REED. Thank you very much, sir. Thank you.

Let me ask you another question, General Schoomaker. Just so I am accurate, how many brigades do you have in Iraq today, Active and Reserve component?

General SCHOOMAKER. A total of 17 brigades, 2 of which are Marine Corps, the remainder are Army.

Senator REED. I will just concentrate on the Army. You have 15 Army brigades?

General SCHOOMAKER. That is correct, seven of which are National Guard.

Senator REED. Fifteen brigades. How many brigades have you designated for the next rotation?

General SCHOOMAKER. We are planning the same number.

Senator REED. Fifteen. That leaves how many brigades in your force, both Reserve and National Guard?

General SCHOOMAKER. The Guard brigades will be down. I think we are going down to two or three Guard brigades in the next rotation.

Senator REED. What I am trying to get at is, you have a certain number of brigades in country, you have a certain number of brigades that have been designated to go in country?

General SCHOOMAKER. Correct.

Senator REED. Then you have a remaining group of brigades that are scattered throughout the United States. How many brigades are those, roughly?

General SCHOOMAKER. We have 15 in there—there is not a clean break between this. It is a constant flow of brigades. So we are planning for the next, for subsequent rotations, exactly what we have in there today.

Senator REED. No, I understand that, sir.

General SCHOOMAKER. The dwell time between those brigades is roughly 19, 20 months. We have sufficient brigades to continue to do this.

Senator REED. I am just trying to get a handle—let me cut to the chase. Of those brigades that are not in Iraq, that are not scheduled to go to Iraq and training up for it, the remaining brigades, what is their readiness status in personnel, equipment, and training?

General SCHOOMAKER. I will have to give that to you for the record, because it is very complex, and it is different, and especially since we are transforming and changing the brigades that we have brought out into the Army modular force.

[The information referred to follows:]

The information to answer the question is sensitive in nature and can best be answered using the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) Model. The remaining brigades are in the reset/train phase. In order to meet the demands of the strategic context, the Army has implemented a new ARFORGEN Model. The ARFORGEN provides a structured progression of increased unit readiness over time resulting in recurring periods of availability of trained, ready, and cohesive units prepared for operational deployment in support of regional combatant commanders and civil authorities. Army units will be placed into one of three force pools as they progress through the ARFORGEN Operational Readiness Cycles. Units will progress through the Reset/Train, and Ready force pools, culminating in full mission readiness and availability to deploy. Units returning from deployment and in the reset/train phase

will be considered unavailable for major combat operations in order to recover equipment, and receive and stabilize new personnel. All units will be prepared to conduct unit training and missions appropriate to their respective force pools.

Senator REED. I understand that modularization is going on, but there are repeated reports that units that are here, not getting ready to go to Iraq, are short of personnel, significantly short of equipment, and, because of the shortage of equipment, are not actively training as effectively as they could because they do not have the equipment. As a result, their readiness status is something below what we have seen over the last——

General SCHOOMAKER. I think in some cases that is a true statement. I think the units that we are breaking apart and resetting are not ready, and we knew that, and we planned for that, and that is exactly what we are doing. Others are more ready.

Senator REED. What percentage of this residual force constitutes those unready brigades? I am trying to get a feel for what our strategic reserve is really.

General SCHOOMAKER. I will have to give you the detail for the record, and I think it probably would also be better if we did not do it in open session.

Senator REED. I understand that, but I think one of the problems we face is that we have people come up and say there are no real problems, and then when we try to press for the real numbers and the real readiness status, we do run into issues.

General SCHOOMAKER. I do not think anybody is telling you there are no real problems. I am certainly not telling you there are no real problems. I think we have enormous challenges, and we are transforming an Army in the middle of a fight, a sustained fight. My belief is we are doing it quite well. My belief is we are building an Army for the future that is the kind of Army we are going to need for the future, and I do not know how to get from here to there without going through the ugliness that is required to make the transformation.

Senator REED. I think you are right in terms of the transformation, but I think we have to get a sense of the readiness of the forces overall, the readiness of the Reserve Forces, because frankly all of us have been told or have read where, particularly with the Reserve component, that these forces are breaking down because they do not have equipment, they do not have all their personnel, and the training is being affected.

I know this is a transformation process, but I think we have to have that sense.

General SCHOOMAKER. Senator Reed, we will come and lay out everything, and I know you know that we have done this. In all fairness, we have been in constant dialogue, not only with members of this committee, but with both houses, any time that we have been asked to lay out everything that we need to lay out, and we will be glad to do it again.

It is a moving shot group. You are right, there is a considerable amount of ugliness in here. We understood that. We planned it, and we have to do it, but I might remind you that we started this with the force that we came through the 1990s with. We started with the force that already had a considerable amount of hollowness in it. We started with a force that had less than 500 up-ar-

mored HMMWVs in it in the entire United States Army before this whole thing started. We are now at over 38,000 up-armored vehicles, as an example.

We started with a force that was short body armor, and if we had gone on the programmatic schedule that was there it would have taken us 49 years to equip the Army with body armor. We were short on crew-served weapons, night vision goggles, almost everything that you can imagine. It has everything to do with drawing down a force and taking a multi-billion dollar, almost a $100 billion, procurement holiday in the decade of the 1990s.

We are not only digging our way out of a hole from that, but we are also transforming to a force that is 30 percent larger and about 60 percent more ready.

Senator REED. Does not something have to do with our operations in Iraq? Frankly, the Army went into Iraq with a lot of up-armored HMMWVs and for months there was no change.

General SCHOOMAKER. We went into Iraq with less than 500.

Senator REED. That is right. If we were not in Iraq, we would probably have less than 500 up-armored HMMWVs, because the need would not have arisen.

General SCHOOMAKER. If your point is that the war has helped us transform more rapidly, you are correct, because Congress has provided resources we did not have before to transform.

Senator REED. I think my point, General, is that you have suggested that you inherited an Army that was in very bad shape, and you are trying to get it better. One of the major reasons why you have to acquire new up-armored HMMWVs and body armor, is because we have actively engaged in combat in Iraq, and frankly, the first impression of the Army was that this HMMWV problem was not a big problem, I will tell you that.

General SCHOOMAKER. We had an Army—and I would like to restate what you just said. I inherited an Army that was designed to do something different than we are doing today. It was designed for the Cold War kind of conflict. It was designed to be filled out once the—we took risks, because everybody thought there was going to be time——

Senator REED. General, you used the term "the hollow Army" before you took charge.

General SCHOOMAKER. It was certainly more hollow than it is today.

Senator REED. General, you are switching from a hollow Army to a Cold War Army to everything else. What I asked simply was to tell me how ready your Army is for contingencies other than what we are in.

General SCHOOMAKER. Our Army is much readier than it was. There is considerable turbulence in it because we are transforming it. I will tell you, we have a combat-experienced Army, and we have an Army that is rapidly, every day becoming more capable to do what we are going to have to do for the 21st century. I know no way to pole-vault over all of this that we have to do to get there.

Senator REED. General, I look forward to your specifics about the readiness of the forces that you have.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator.

General MYERS. Mr. Chairman, just to answer Senator Reed. One part of that question, which is on readiness. Title 10 requires the Chairman to submit a strategic risk assessment every year, and that was submitted, I think in April, to Congress. I might be off on the month, but it was submitted. It contains a lot of that information. I assume you have read that. It is classified, of course. It was a product of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It is the Chairman's assessment. Of course, you rely on the Service Chiefs for their input, and the combatant commands, for that matter.

That goes a long way to explaining what we can do, and it is the backdrop and the foundation for the statements I make about our readiness to take on other challenges. If you want to break it down by Service in more detail, you would have to go to the Army to do that.

Senator REED. Mr. Chairman, if I may.

I understand from the public reports of your report that for the first time—and you have issued the reports over the last several years—you indicated some concern about our ability to respond in a timely fashion. If that is correct, then how do you square it with General Schoomaker's remarks that the forces are better now than they were several years ago?

Chairman WARNER. Let me say, Senator, it is an important question, and I would like to have the Chief respond to it for the record. We have quite a few members waiting for their question period.

Senator ROBERTS. You're not kidding?

Chairman WARNER. Thank you for the echo chamber. Anyway, Senator Inhofe, we are doing the best we can here to operate a hearing.

General MYERS. I will do that, Mr. Chairman.

[The information referred to follows:]

The report referred to by Senator Reed is the 2005 Chairman's Risk Assessment Report, provided in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 153(b). This report provides the CJCS assessment of the military and strategic risks associated with executing missions called for under the current National Military Strategy over the next 12 months. The report addresses several issues with respect to response timelines.

[Deleted.]

Chairman WARNER. Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Schoomaker, following along this transformation thing, we have been living through this. I think when Senator Akaka and I started the Army Caucus that was our main thrust and the thing that we talked about. You and I have talked about it, and General Shinseki. It goes back to two of your predecessors.

The Army is trying to modularize, modernize, recapitalize, reorganize, and all of this, at the same time we are in the middle of prosecuting a war. I have a concern that as we focus on our current force, we lose focus on the future. The Army has already cancelled over 29 systems in the last 4 or 5 years, leaving them with only one major system for the future, the Future Combat System (FCS). We are all very excited about the FCS. We want to see it coming. We know it is lighter and faster. We know it meets the needs as we think they are going to be needed in the future.

But what is your level of confidence right now in the Army's ability to deliver the FCS and the set of manned ground vehicles on

schedule and to put us and the Army in a position to be able to handle these contingencies as they come up?

General SCHOOMAKER. Senator, you are exactly right. This is our future. The FCS of the Army is not just one system; it is a system of systems, and it is very complex and technologically advanced.

I have a high degree of confidence that if we can stay on the current plan that we will be able to bring FCS in as we need to. I am concerned that there may be language in the authorization bill that would move our manned ground systems and other things back into science and technology (S&T). If that occurs we will not be able to afford FCS nor will we be able to complete it, because we are modernizing our force and transforming it with the spinouts from FCS into the current force.

I think we have to keep it on track as we have restructured it, both from the standpoint of the way I reprogrammed and restructured it last year and the way the Secretary of the Army has taken the business side of it and worked the contractual side. If we can do that, I have a high degree of confidence.

Senator INHOFE. Those comments will come in handy as we go through our reauthorization process. I agree, that we have to stay on schedule. We would have never guessed 10 years ago what our needs would be today, but we have a pretty good idea where we are going and I think there is general agreement. I worry that we are going to slide on this thing, so I appreciate your comments.

Let me, while we are talking, compliment you on your courage to admit that we started off with a real serious problem after the 1990s. There were two problems in the 1990s. One was the deterioration in the military. The other was what happened to our modernization program. I remember when General Jumper, back in 1997, 1998, stood up and said: "Now, our potential enemies have a better strike vehicle than our F–15 or F–16," talking about the Su–30s that are being sold, were being sold at that time, to China and other countries.

I am glad that you are stating that this came along at a time when there was hollowness in the force. We know that. We know it is true. Nobody says it. So I compliment you on saying it.

Now let me get into something else. Admiral Tom Hall, who is the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, and from Oklahoma, and he is now running the Guard and Reserve, he was in my office this week, and we talked about how things have changed. He said, and this is his quote now: "You recruit a soldier and you retain a family." He talked about the big problem that they are having right now Guard and Reserve recruiting. I do not want you folks to imply there is no problem in recruiting when we are having a problem.

His estimation is something that I have believed for a long time. One of the problems you are having is the family is involved in not encouraging their young people to get into the military because of all the negative media that is out there.

I applaud a guy that I went over to see. I was so impressed with Lieutenant Colonel Tim Ryan and his courage to stand up and tell the truth that I went over to Iraq just to talk to him. He said—now listen to this: "All right, I have had enough. I am tired of reading distorted and glossy exaggerated stories from major news orga-

nizations about the failures in the war in Iraq. The inaccurate picture they paint has distorted the world view of the daily realities in Iraq. The result is a further erosion of international support for the United States efforts there and a strengthening of the insurgents' resolve and recruiting efforts while weakening our own. Through their incomplete, uninformed, and unbalanced reporting, many members of the media covering the war in Iraq are aiding and abetting the enemy."

He finished this one statement by saying—and this is really important: "The key to the enemy's success is use of his limited assets to gain the greatest influence over the masses. The media serves as a glass through which a relatively small event can be magnified to international proportions, and the enemy is exploiting this with incredible ease. There is not good news to counteract the bad, so the enemy scores a victory almost every day."

I was very proud of him. As I go over there—and I have been over there many times now—the first thing that is said to me by the troops—these are marines and soldiers—is: "Why is it that they do not like us?" They are talking about the media. "Why is it that people back home do not have a clear picture of our successes?" If we could just have the picture of these guys in Fallujah, General Madhi, who was actually a brigade commander for Saddam Hussein, who is now the brigade commander for the Iraqi security forces, he was so impressed with what the marines were doing there that he changed the name to the "Fallujah Marines." Here is a guy who hated Americans before then. It was all because of the embedded training with the marines.

The same thing is true in Tikrit. We went to Tikrit. Those kids had the same response. So this I know is having a negative effect on our ability to recruit. If any of the three of you uniformed officers would respond to that, I would appreciate it.

General SCHOOMAKER. I will respond first because I personally second what Colonel Ryan is saying. I think that those views are broadly held across our Army, and it is routinely stated by those that come home, on leave or otherwise, that they cannot believe the difference in what they know is going on over there and what people here are being told.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you.

General HAGEE. I align myself with the Chief of Staff of the Army on that, sir; absolutely correct.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you very much, General.

General MYERS. Senator Inhofe?

Senator INHOFE. Yes, General Myers.

General MYERS. Of course I align myself with the two Service Chiefs. I think all of us that occupy senior leadership positions, no matter where it is in this country, have to be very careful about what we say because it is, as you said—our adversary is much better at what I would call strategic communications than we are. It will comfort them if we say wrong things or intemperate things, and it certainly confuses our troops.

You hear it all the time, and it is demoralizing to folks that have been sent over to do a job, are doing a job, doing a darn good job, and to hear comments that somehow besmirch either their integ-

rity or the nobility of what they are doing. It is not helpful. It is very harmful.

Senator INHOFE. It is very harmful also when we have members of the United States Senate saying things that are critical, because that is used in their propaganda machine.

I would just like to have you keep that in mind, because the story that needs to be told is the true story, the story of the soldier helping someone repair a roof after a problem and helping the kids. As I was flying over the Sunni Triangle, our kids, our troops, were throwing out candy and cookies, little kids in these villages waving American flags. I can remember on the first freedom flight in 1991 going back to Kuwait when a little boy, a 9 year old boy, who had both of his ears cut off only because he was holding an American flag, and they are waving them now. That story has to be told.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Roberts.

Senator ROBERTS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, thank you for being here today and for your service to the country. Your dedication is appreciated. To our warfighters that you have introduced, General Schoomaker: Bless your hearts and thank you very much for your service.

Return with me now to those not so thrilling days of yesteryear of about 5 years ago, to the issue of hollowness. I can remember very well at that particular time that this committee was holding a hearing and we had the Joint Chiefs here. I asked the question, do you have the funding necessary, the wherewithal necessary to accomplish your mission, because there had been a lot of talk about our military being thin and stretched and hollow. Every one of the chiefs answered: Yes, sir, we can do our mission with the current funding, with the exception of General Krulak, bless his heart. He said: No, sir, I cannot do the mission that I am assigned to do the way that we should do it. Now, the United States Marine Corps can put cold steel on the enemy any place, any time, that the President wants, but we could do it better if we had additional funding.

General Krulak's phone number was on speed dial in regards from the White House, but he had the courage to say what was on his mind. Now, that was in the spring. In the fall everybody said: Okay, it's Chicken Little time and we have to have more money, and we passed a supplemental. So the Army and the Navy and the Air Force and the Marine Corps that you inherited, all of you, was at that time stretched and thin and hollow.

Then we got ourselves in a situation with Kosovo and also a situation with Afghanistan, and then we got into a situation with Iraq and the global war on terrorism, plus transformation. Why would you not have a problem? Then in the theater in which we have the war that is being conducted, it is the most obtrusive in regards to conditions for equipment that you can imagine. Why would you not have a problem?

So I really empathize with your statements. It is not that we cannot fix it, cannot do it, but Congress should stand up to that and admit to the situation that you inherited and the new challenges that you have had.

Having got that out of my system, General Schoomaker, you enlisted 6,157 new soldiers, 507 more than the monthly goal, in the

finest Army in the world. I want to congratulate you for that. I know we have problems. You also said that our retention numbers also remain high. General Hagee, you said the same thing on that. That does not mean that we do not have problems on down the road.

But basically, I agree with Senator Inhofe. With the deluge of negative news that we get daily, it is just amazing to me that anybody would want to sign up. Now, I can recount back in the dark ages when I joined the Marine Corps, the reason I joined is because some lieutenant colonel with a sty in his eye, who was not happy being a recruiter to begin with, asked me what in the hell I could do for the Marine Corps, instead of what the Marine Corps could do for me, and said that if I got in trouble, why, a squad would come after me. If the squad could not do it, a platoon would come after me; if they could not do it, a company; and then a battalion, and then we went right up to the entire Marine Corps, and he said: Son, we have not been stopped yet. I raised my right hand.

I think there is still that kind of service-induced patriotism that exists out there, and I think as we stabilize Iraq that will take care of itself.

I was out at Fort Riley this past weekend when a battalion came back, and there were 12 Purple Hearts, 3 Bronze Stars awarded. I went over, shook their hands. I said: "Thank you very much on behalf of the Senate Armed Services Committee," and I mentioned your name, Mr. Chairman, and those of us on the committee, and I said, "and the Congress of the United States."

The last gentleman, who had two Purple Hearts, looked at me and he said: "What in the Lord's name is going on in Congress with all these negative comments?" Everything that we say has a bearing in regards to our adversaries and also on the morale of our troops. I think we have to be very careful in regards to what we say.

Now, I have made a speech, and so I will probably run out of time for my question. Yesterday General Pace said during his nomination hearing—and by the way, he did a great job; and by the way, he does happen to be the first Marine to be the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and follows an outstanding Chairman of the Joint Chiefs who just happens to be a Kansan.

At any rate, General Pace said this: "It is going to take us 2 years, 2 years, in depot repair and maintenance to get back to the place that we should be if, in fact, we faced a threat, a serious threat someplace else around the world." That is, I think, what worries this committee, that we are wearing out our equipment. I am not sure we are wearing out our troops. They still remain committed, although I know it is a very tough challenge.

Is that about your estimate of where we are—I would ask probably Secretary Chu and also General Myers to comment on that—in regards to the time it will take to repair and basically get regeared, if that is the proper word for it, to fight another major battle if we have to once we are successful in regards to the Mideast?

Dr. CHU. It is, sir, a matter given constant attention. It does take time. Some of the time is the physical limit required to effect the repairs, but there is another element that ties in with General Schoomaker's comments on transformation. We are changing the

equipment that units have, so in many cases we have decided we would rather wait for the new equipment and structure the unit along the new lines rather than expend taxpayers' resources on something we are not going to keep for the long run.

There are some risks taken there. There is a balance. There is an issue of how best to do that. It will take time. It does not mean that the United States cannot meet its military needs. We can.

General Myers.

General MYERS. Senator Roberts, you are right. The equipment is under—we are wearing out our equipment pretty fast. As Secretary Chu said, there is a big lag time, whether it is depot repair or whether it is new production. The supplemental funding that we got this year, in 2005, is absolutely essential, and it started to right this problem, but a lot of that we are not going to see for a year, or in some cases, 2 years. So General Pace is absolutely right.

The fact remains that, as I said in my strategic risk assessment earlier, that we have the equipment to do what we are doing and fulfill our national security strategy, which is to conduct another operation. We can do what we need to do with the equipment we have, but we have to stay at this procurement and this repair cycle. If I were going to focus somewhere, that is where I would focus. That is very important.

We have already talked about the procurement holiday that we all know we took in the last century. We are coming out of that holiday, but the accounts that are first to support other needs are the procurement accounts. It is always where we go in the DOD when we need to do other things like operations. We put operations first, we put future procurement a little lower priority, and that is where we go. We overdid it in the 1990s. We are coming out of that now. We are in my estimation almost well, but not quite well.

Senator ROBERTS. I thank you all. My time is up and I thank you for yours.

Chairman WARNER. We thank the distinguished chairman of the Intelligence Committee for his participation this morning, as always.

Senator Dole.

Senator DOLE. Gentlemen, I am concerned about post-traumatic stress disorder in our servicemembers and the stress on families associated with the long deployments. In the Red Cross we stood up a program with regard to mental health counseling for those who have experienced emotional trauma because of disasters. Of course, through our Armed Forces Emergency Services the Red Cross has provided counseling for families since World War II.

General Hagee, in your submitted opening statement you mentioned your operational stress program where you have mental health professionals at aid stations. I would be interested in hearing how you think that program is working, how effective you feel it has been, and, General Schoomaker, whether the Army has a similar program.

Let me also mention that the Department of Veterans' Affairs published a study—this was March 31, the New England Journal of Medicine—and it reported that 17 percent of marines and soldiers reported early symptoms of depression, anxiety, or post-trau-

matic stress disorder. But of those servicemembers, only 40 percent sought any sort of mental health care.

So I would also be interested in hearing from all of you what is being done to get these troops to seek and to receive the kind of mental care that they need. A lot of questions in one here. But General Hagee, if you could begin; and General Schoomaker; and then I would like to hear from all of you on that second part.

General HAGEE. Yes, Senator. Thank you very much for that very important question. I do not believe that there is any one program that will solve this particular issue. First, I believe that every single individual is affected by combat in one way or the other. Some are affected more than others. The operational stress control and readiness program that you talked about, where we put a trained individual with a psychiatrist down at the battalion level, is just one part of an overarching program that we have.

We spend a great deal of time before the unit leaves talking about the stress that they will realize when they are overseas, when they are in combat. We have programs while they are there. For the first time that I can think of, we actually rotate individuals out of the "front lines"—I use that in quotes because, of course, there are no front lines over there—but back to areas of relative stability and safety, to where they can recoup. We do that as a unit.

We stress the fact that everyone is affected by combat and that if you feel stress that you should come forward and look for help. As the unit gets ready to come home, we spend time with the individual marine talking about what he has seen, or what she has seen there, and what the reunion is going to be like. On the other end, we spend a great deal of time with the families talking about the same thing before they come back. Then after the reunion, we actually have standdowns by battalion, where everyone has to participate in the program, once again underlining the fact that there's nothing wrong with feeling this stress and, most importantly, providing points of contact and references where they can go, people with whom they can talk if they feel this stress.

The plan is is to continue that, not just after they come back, but this has to be an ongoing process, because you never know when these symptoms might develop.

Senator DOLE. General Schoomaker.

General SCHOOMAKER. I align myself totally with the Commandant and what he said. I just add, to maybe put a little perspective on it from the standpoint of the Army. We deal with it. First of all, everybody is affected by combat. Anybody that denies that is truly in denial. So we are trying to deal with it before the fact, during now workups and our training in terms of heightening people's awareness to the fact that they will be dealing with things and that it is important to deal with them realistically and directly.

Second, while in theater, we have formal combat stress teams that every time that, let us say, a unit experiences a traumatic situation, where we can directly intervene and start that process there. Upon return, during the reintegration process, we have a formal reintegration process. I am personally encouraged by the fact that we are having more and more people that are willing to come forward and get help and treatment, regardless of rank, and

we are seeing some considerable success in the people that do participate, whether it be in personal counseling through the variety of resources that are available or in marriage counseling, for instance, on reintegrating with the family or with the spouse when they return. Then of course we are having, with those who do have continuing problems, continued contact and follow-up.

I think we are approaching this very comprehensively. It would be fair to say that we continue to learn as we go on this, and we continue to adapt as we find necessary, but I think it is a good news story.

Dr. CHU. Senator Dole, if I might add——

Senator DOLE. Yes.

Dr. CHU.—I would like to pick up on a point that General Schoomaker touched on, which is leadership of the units. What is given a little less attention in that New England Journal article is the reality that there is a background level of some of these issues in any community of individuals. What is striking to me is how little these stress indicators change. They do go up post-deployment, but, given what these troops have sustained, I think it is a great tribute to the leadership of the noncommissioned officers and the commissioned officers of our forces, that we have seen such a modest rise.

Nonetheless, every returning individual, as General Hagee and General Schoomaker have described, receives an evaluation on this issue and other health issues. We recognize that post-traumatic stress disorder often does not show up right away, and so we have inaugurated an effort to reach out to every returning individual at roughly the 3 to 6-month point, including those who have been discharged, to reevaluate their situation and reinforce the message that General Schoomaker and General Hagee offered, that we do offer you assistance, it is just fine to ask for it, do not be shy. There is that issue in our society, as you have underscored.

I have worked personally with Gordon Mansfield, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Deputy Secretary, on this issue. He is adding the capacity of the VA, which has been a leader in this field for many years, as I know you are aware. We are very much dedicated to offering our people the support that they deserve.

Senator DOLE. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, I will submit some additional questions for the record. My time has expired.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator. I wish to point out because of your interest and work on the committee, our bill, which hopefully will be going to the floor here in a week or two, contains provisions on this.

Senator DOLE. Yes.

Chairman WARNER. We thank you for your interest in this subject.

Senator DOLE. Yes, indeed. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Thune.

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, thank you for being here today, and thank you for your extraordinary service to our country and the soldiers you brought with you today. I cannot tell you how much we all appreciate, despite sometimes the random statements that come out of

this place—those are not reflective of the enormous support that we have here in Congress for the good work the troops are doing, and I would say around the country as well. I know, certainly in my home State of South Dakota, that we are extremely appreciative of the way that you are taking the fight to the terrorists so that we do not have to deal with many of those threats here at home. So thank you.

I want to explore a question here and come back a little bit to what Senator Roberts was referring to earlier. Clearly, the war in Iraq and Afghanistan has involved one of the largest operations probably since World War II in terms of logistics, lift requirements, and repeated rotational deployments of major units to those theaters. In fact, some units and personnel are rotating in theater for their third tour.

As was alluded to earlier by Senator Roberts, yesterday at his confirmation hearing, General Pace stated that it would take 2 years to put the deployed equipment through maintenance depots and to get them back into shape. Following up on that, Secretary Chu, General Myers, perhaps you could describe more broadly—what impact and strain the repeated rotational deployments of ground units and air squadrons to Iraq and Afghanistan have had on yearly training cycles, readiness ratings, maintenance cycles, and, of course, on the home base infrastructure that support these units?

Dr. CHU. Thank you, Senator. A very important question. Let me pick up on something General Schoomaker mentioned in response to Senator Reed's questions about readiness of Army units. One of the by-products of the extraordinary times in which we find ourselves is that, indeed, the experience level of our force has increased. This is a battle-tested force. It knows what it is doing. It is extremely professional. I think the great news in terms of the state of this force is the high retention rates that we have been privileged to enjoy.

Those retention rates are not an accident. They are a result of your willingness to give us the tools necessary to persuade people to continue with us. They are a reflection of the extraordinary leadership of the military units.

But in my judgment, in any organization, while equipment is important, ultimately its performance comes down to the quality of its people and their motivation. I want to associate myself with the views of these two service chiefs and the chairman about the high quality of both attributes in our military force today.

There certainly are issues about equipment repair, resetting the force, as people like to describe it. It does take time. It takes funds, and we are grateful for the funds that Congress provides in that regard.

We are also beginning to move, particularly the Reserve Forces, to a different paradigm. To ensure that the deploying units have the most up-to-date equipment, we are concentrating that equipment on those units, often leaving the equipment in theater. This is not the way traditionally the American military did it—leaving the equipment in theater, so the unit comes to the equipment, rather than bringing everything with it and then shipping everything back home.

The corollary may be that for the units at home, if they are not intended to be next in line, they will have a smaller allocation of the most modern gear. That is deliberate. We try to ensure they have enough to train on realistically and be prepared, but not necessarily—and this is a change I think the Army is trying to make in how it thinks about units and their equipping, especially Reserve units—not necessarily have every unit have every item of the most modern gear.

We can never have as much of the most modern gear as we like, because by definition, it is the item just off the assembly line. So the strategy is to concentrate that gear at the point where it will make the most difference, which is disproportionately in the deployed theater.

General SCHOOMAKER. If I could add, the reason I was having difficulty with Senator Reed in answering his questions, is that we are consuming equipment in Iraq, depending upon which equipment we are talking about, from three to ten times what we would normally experience. This is why we have gone to a strategy where we leave equipment in Iraq and rotate soldiers on the equipment, because that gives us an opportunity to reset those units when they return on top of equipment we have been working on during their absence.

If you were to go to the 101st Air Assault Division today or the 82nd Airborne Division, 10th Mountain Division, 4th Infantry Division, you would find a considerable amount of sparks and dust flying down there building a far more capable organization than left going to Iraq. That is why this whole issue of readiness is, it truly is, a moving train.

Now, the idea of reset. I have testified now for 2 years as we have been talking about the supplemental funding required to reset this force. It will take us at least 2 years to reset this force from what we are consuming in this war. There is no doubt in my mind. We have historical precedents for this. If you look at Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, that is exactly what it took us, about 2 years to do it just for that. This conflict has far greater consumption than that one did. I am very confident it will take us 2 years and that is why we have been testifying to that effect.

I am most concerned that we will lose interest at the end of this conflict and forget the fact that we are going to have to reset this force, and we will start out again with the kind of challenges we had when we went into this particular conflict.

Senator THUNE. If I could just follow up on that. Obviously these challenges that you have noted and the fact that it is going to take time to reset, and the likelihood, obviously, that we are going to be in Iraq for several more years in significant numbers, it seems intuitive that by beginning this massive process of relocating and consolidating units and missions at bases throughout the United States, that the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process is only going to add to that strain.

We obviously did not envision this situation in 2001 when Congress envisioned this current round of BRAC. I guess layering that on top of all the challenges that we now face in light of the issues that were addressed yesterday by General Pace, and which you have responded to here this morning, how do you plan to adapt to

yet another major mission involving major realignments and consolidations at the same time we are rotating units into and out of Iraq and Afghanistan without adding further burdens to our military at the worst possible time?

General SCHOOMAKER. From the standpoint of the Army, our transformation really is like a rope. It has BRAC involved in it, it has the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) involved, it has the overseas realignments, the global force posturing. It has our transformation to a modular force in there. All of this comes together in a momentum and gives us opportunity we did not have before as we fight this war.

One of the few silver linings in the cloud of having to be at war is the fact that it gives us opportunity to take advantage of the velocity and the momentum you gain as you reset the force to reset it the way you want it to be in the future. That is what we are doing. Part of the ugliness that we have been discussing here is the fact that we started with three armies. We had the Army of the Cold War that we were organizing to go fight the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, that we come back and reset to the Army of the future. So there are three different armies going on at the same time, and when this is over we should all be reset forward to the kind of Army that is more relevant to the 21st century.

I will just give you a real quick example. The 507th Maintenance Company that everybody remembers, Jessica Lynch was assigned to, was not trained to be in the situation they were in, was not equipped to be there—no Global Positioning System (GPS), no radios, no training on crew-served weapons, only one crew-served weapon in there, no night vision goggles.

Chairman WARNER. We are losing your voice, General. You are not into the mike.

General SCHOOMAKER. I am sorry.

The 507th Maintenance Company found itself in contact with the enemy; no radios, no night vision goggles, one crew-served weapon, no training on the kinds of situation they found themselves in, because they were organized for a Cold War battlefield that was echeloned and they were not supposed to be placed in that position.

That is what I was trying to say here. It is not that the Army was hollow to the total extent. It was because it was organized for a different kind of fight, and it was hollow at the same time. Now we are trying to overcome both the hollowness and the transformation for the kind of world that we have now in the 21st century—realigning, global force reposturing, transforming, and fighting a war. We are doing this very well. It is extraordinary, and it is because of these soldiers and because of the support that Congress has given us. We ought to be damn happy about the way things are going.

Senator THUNE. I think that the resources Congress has provided have certainly helped, and we are doing a masterful job of fighting the war, but as we project out and we start looking at the length of this conflict and these deployments, I am worried about personnel, manpower, everything else. It seems like a complication, because we do not know what some of the overseas basing requirements are going to be, and we do not have yet a good feel for—I know you are in the process of modernizing——

General SCHOOMAKER. Senator, if we do not transform, we will be in trouble for the long term. We have to transform to increase the capacity and to make ourselves more relevant. We are talking about building an Army that has 30 percent more capability and about 60 percent increase in availability. We are talking about bringing a National Guard that was terribly hollow, disorganized, overstructured, the same with the Reserves, the same with the regular force, and bringing it into a context that is a total Army.

The difference in the three components is availability, and we have a force generation model now that will generate. The chiefs of both the Guard and Reserve are back here, and they will tell you that we could do this indefinitely when we get into the formation that we are going to. By 2006 we will have 80 percent of that done.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator. That was a very important colloquy that you had.

General MYERS. Mr. Chairman, let me just, first of all, support everything that General Schoomaker said. We had a choice when September 11 happened, as we got into conflict, that was: do we fight the war and put transformation on hold, or do we transform? For all the reasons that General Schoomaker said, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the senior leadership of the Department said we have to transform.

I would only add that I think BRAC is an important part of that transformation. Depending on what the administration and what Congress does with the BRAC recommendations, we have 5 years to implement them. That should give us plenty of time to smoothflow any big issues that we have. The Joint Chiefs of Staff are fully behind the BRAC recommendations. We have stated that before in hearings. This is an important piece of our transformation.

If you take one piece out, then we are, as General Schoomaker said, left without a full bucket, and it would make life a lot more difficult.

Chairman WARNER. I thank the panel. We will have to move on.

Senator Kennedy.

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome. One thing, General Schoomaker. I find that those in the National Guard in Massachusetts who have left their equipment over there find that they are not able to keep up the training here back home, and they do not feel that they can fulfill their Guard responsibilities. That is something that I have heard. I am sure you have heard it, and you are going to have to address it. I can understand your earlier answer, but that is certainly something that we picked up.

The President spoke on Tuesday night about the hard work of our troops, and he urged Americans to send them letters, raise flags in their honor, and to help the military family down the street, but he did not assure them that they would have the equipment they need to fight the war, and I believe he should have.

More than 400 of our troops in Iraq have died in military vehicles hit by roadside bombs, grenades, and the so-called improvised explosive devices. Yet our troops do not have the protective equipment they need. The marines are still waiting for the 495 armored HMMWVs they ordered last year. There is no excuse, absolutely no excuse, to send the military into battle unprotected.

General Schoomaker, I raised this issue with you in November 2003 and again with you and General Hagee at a hearing in February 2004. General Myers, I raised this issue last April before one of our hearings. In December, Secretary Rumsfeld was confronted by soldiers so desperate for armor that they had been forced to dig through the trash for scrap metal.

This April, General Hagee's deputy testified at a Seapower Subcommittee hearing that the marines had all the funding they needed for the up-armored HMMWVs. Yet last week General Nyland and General Cato testified before the House about the lack of urgency in solving the problem.

When the Department refuses to speak up for our troops, it is hard to convince Congress to act. Over a year ago, Senator Bayh and I offered an amendment to the defense authorization bill to include an additional $600 million for armored vehicles and we faced resistance.

This year we tried to add the funds for the armored vehicles to the Iraqi supplemental. We knew there would be a production gap if we did not act, but we were told that the military had all the money it needed. Senator Stevens said on the floor: "We have met these requirements. We do not need additional money from the emergency bill to be spent on up-armored HMMWVs." But we succeeded in adding $213 million anyway. This was resisted by even members of our committee here.

Again and again we have been reassured that we have enough armored vehicles for our troops. Now we learn that the Marine Corps requirement for up-armored HMMWVs has gone from 498 to 2,400. That is a fivefold increase. Why can we not get it straight? Should not the safety of the troops be your, the President's, and our highest priority?

I hope you will work with us to see that this new requirement is fully funded so we do not have to keep repeating the mistakes of the past while our soldiers are dying in the roadside blasts.

General Myers or General Hagee?

General MYERS. Senator Kennedy, you are absolutely right, safety and the force protection of our troops is absolutely the first priority. As was covered just a little bit earlier in the hearing, we have a thinking adversary, which changes sometimes the requirements. We have tried to keep pace with those requirements, and I think we have done a fairly good job of that. I will not say it was a perfect job, but a fairly good job of trying to provide the equipment that our men and women need as they go into battle.

I think in terms of whether it is the protective vest and then upgrading those to meet the different threats or some of the other equipment that I would rather not talk about in an open hearing—the vehicles certainly we can talk about and the standard—the Secretary of Defense said that by February 15 of this year we would not have any vehicles off compounds that did not have armor protection. We have done all that, and we will continue to do that, and we will continue to try to look around corners to try to predict what it is this adversary will throw our way so we can continue to provide the protection that our folks need.

One of the things that we forget very often when we talk about protecting our forces is that while equipment is a big piece of it,

another big piece of it is their training. Another big piece of it is their leadership. I think on those counts we do very well in most cases. We work that piece very hard, and that in many cases is as important as the equipment that we provide.

Senator KENNEDY. General Hagee, would you respond? You might have had an opportunity to read that New York Times article in the last week, which was all related to the Marine Corps' request and the marines. If not, I suggest that you get a hold of it. They are talking about that they did not get the money for the 498 HMMWVs until February, and now they are going to have a request for 2,600 additional HMMWVs for Iraq.

General HAGEE. I have read the article, Senator, and I would like to align myself with the Chairman. When we went back into Iraq in February, when we were told that we were going to go back into Iraq in September 2003, we had about 30 armored vehicles. By the time that we put the marines on the ground in February 2004, every single vehicle that went in harm's way was armored. Was it an up-armored HMMWV? No, sir. It was not. But it was the best steel that we could find, using the best engineers that we could find, to armor those vehicles.

Since that time, we have continued to spiral development that armor, providing the very best that we can to the marines and soldiers that are there. As the Chairman said, the force protection of our troops is absolutely priority number one.

We have also testified that this is an adaptive, thinking enemy, and we are responding very aggressively as he changes his tactics. Right now we have 1,000 of the Marine Armor Kits (MAK), the so-called MAK vehicles. This is add-on armor that we put on the A–2s, in country. We are ahead of schedule on producing those vehicles. We hope to have here in just the next few months about 1,700 of those particular vehicles done. Then we want to replace the remainder of our vehicles that are in harm's way, not only in Iraq but in Afghanistan, in the Horn of Africa, on our Marine Expeditionary Units. We want to replace those that have armor on them with the up-armored HMMWV, and that is the reason for the request for the 2,600.

Senator KENNEDY. My time is just about up. But your testimony here is that no marine goes out on patrol now in any vehicle that does not have the up-armored——

General HAGEE. No, sir.

Senator KENNEDY. —or the armor plating?

General HAGEE. No vehicle leaves the compound without armor, not the up-armored HMMWV. We do not have sufficient quantities of those, but right now, we have either the up-armored HMMWV, which is designated level one, or the level two up-armored.

Senator KENNEDY. My time is up, but you will give me a breakdown of, if they go out on patrol, what is armored, what is up-armored?

General HAGEE. Yes, sir, I would be happy to.

Chairman WARNER. I think you raise an important question. Let us take a minute to try and get the terms correct. An up-armored vehicle, I think in the dictionary version of it would simply be something that has a measure of increased armor. But if I under-

stand you, "up-armored" has a specific designation in the Pentagon now?

General HAGEE. Yes, sir. We really talk about three levels. When I use, and I think when most individuals in the military talk about it, "up-armored HMMWV," they are specifically talking about the M–1114. That vehicle is put together at the factory where the armor is integrated into the vehicle. That is level one, and only if the armor is integrated into the vehicle can it be classified as level one.

Chairman WARNER. Up-armored.

General HAGEE. Up-armored.

Chairman WARNER. Now, what is the next level?

General HAGEE. Level two, which for us is an A–2 HMMWV with bolt-on armor, actually has on the sides the same protection as an up-armored HMMWV, that one built at the factory. But because it was not built at the factory, it is defined as level two.

General MYERS. There are factory kits. Level two is factory kits.

General HAGEE. That is correct.

Chairman WARNER. I presume it provides somewhat less protection than the fully up-armored HMMWV, number one?

General HAGEE. On the MAK, it provides less protection on the undercarriage. The up-armored HMMWV will provide protection for a 12-pound blast, undercarriage. The MAK provides 4 pounds.

Chairman WARNER. So level two is somewhat less. Now let us go to level three.

General HAGEE. Level three is less than that. Level three is the homogeneous rolled steel that has been applied to the vehicle. Even though it comes in a kit, it is less than the protection provided by the MAK or the level two.

I can provide exactly what those protection levels are, sir.

Chairman WARNER. In today's operation with the marines, what is the level of equipment that those marines have?

General HAGEE. Level two or level one.

Chairman WARNER. General Schoomaker, your troops?

General SCHOOMAKER. Sir, we go by exactly the same definitions, level one, two, and three. Our goal is to have every vehicle at level one or two, factory-configured, either the integral in the factory or the factory-added armor.

Chairman WARNER. You said "goal." Let me get that down. You said that is a goal, implying that it is not that way today, with your operating forces in Iraq and Afghanistan?

General SCHOOMAKER. We have some level of vehicles that are still in level three, but this is satisfactory steel that has been applied in the field locations to the vehicles. But level one, level two, just like what the Commandant says, is the goal.

Chairman WARNER. I understand the goal. We are trying to establish what is in use today as the troops at this very hour are operating.

General SCHOOMAKER. All three and I believe that is the same in the Marine Corps.

Chairman WARNER. No, he claims one and two.

Senator LEVIN. What percentage are at level three in the Army?

General SCHOOMAKER. About roughly 20, 20 to 24, 25 percent, something like that, are at level three.

Chairman WARNER. Does that answer your question, Senator Kennedy?

Senator KENNEDY. This is, I guess they call it the "hillbilly armor," level three, is what I understand is the term there?

General SCHOOMAKER. We are not using hillbilly armor.

Senator KENNEDY. You do not use the term any more.

General SCHOOMAKER. I might add that this is more than just HMMWVs, and that is the important thing, because we are talking about trucks, Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Trucks (HEMTTs), everything.

Chairman WARNER. I know.

Senator KENNEDY. Just a final question——

General MYERS. Let me, before you finish this discussion——

Chairman WARNER. Excuse me, Mr. Chairman. Let us start from the top so we can listen.

General MYERS. For level one, two, and three, the goal is that we will only have level one and two—and we are going to make our goal—by September.

Chairman WARNER. By September of this year?

General MYERS. This year, we will only have level one and level two. We will no longer have a level three in the field.

Chairman WARNER. That is Marine Corps and Army?

General MYERS. That is all forces. Remember, we have Navy and Air Force over there as well on the roads, actually.

Chairman WARNER. I understand. When I used "Army" I meant those operations.

General MYERS. Right.

General SCHOOMAKER. Could I add something here very quickly? I am sorry.

Chairman WARNER. Yes.

General SCHOOMAKER. Senator Kennedy, when we talked in November 2003, the requirement in theater was less than 2,000 of these vehicles.

Senator KENNEDY. So the requirement has gone up to 9,000 or even more, 10,000 or 12,000. Someone has to be responsible for not understanding last fall why we were not going to—you need 400 times more of these. That is what parents ask me. That is what the Hart family is asking me.

General SCHOOMAKER. I am trying to reinforce your point. We have funding from you now for 42,000 of these vehicles, and we are right now at a level of about 38,000. So we have gone from less than 500 to 38,000 vehicles—I am talking about Army figures now—in the last 22 months. So I think we have gotten considerable support out of Congress to do this, and it is an enormous undertaking. As far as I can tell, the requirement will continue to grow.

Again, the tactics, techniques, and procedures, and the ability of an adaptive enemy to attack these are going to continue to be a challenge.

Chairman WARNER. Has everyone had the full opportunity to testify on that series of questions?

Senator Graham.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I will try to get back to recruiting and retention. That was a very good exchange, to talk about how enormous and what the enor-

mous tasks are of this war. It is ever-changing. It is costly in terms of money and lives, and we are doing the best we can. Sometimes we make mistakes, but that is part of the war.

I want to congratulate all of you for coming today and accepting critiques, criticism, and praise, because that is democracy. No one is going to be able to change how the media reports the war. I wish it would be more balanced. With freedom comes responsibility. So it is not just about money when it comes to recruiting. It is about message.

If you want to defend your country, if you want to play a part in your country's future, join the military, because we need you right now. What happens in Iraq really determines their own freedom.

Now let us talk a little bit about what we are trying to do to address the problem of recruiting and retention. One, I think it is a chronic problem in the area of recruiting, that it has been building, and we need to stay ahead of it.

General Myers, you are a fighter pilot, is that correct?

General MYERS. That is correct, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. You do not let the plane fly you; you fly the plane, right?

General MYERS. You got it, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. You stay ahead of it. I can tell you, working with Chairman Warner and Senator Ben Nelson, my Democratic colleague, that we have one of the most robust recruiting and retention packages possible in the Personnel Subcommittee.

Dr. Chu, thank you for coming to our committee. I want Americans to know there is more money on the table than there has ever been to keep qualified people in. There is more money on the table than there has ever been to get people to join. There is a real good package for quality of life issues for people under psychological stress. This committee, in collaboration with the Department of Defense, is addressing the problem of recruiting and retention.

Dr. CHU. Yes, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. I am pleased to be part of that process.

Now, my concern is where are we going to be in the future? We know how the HMMWV situation is ever-changing. The likelihood of a major military footprint being in existence in Iraq a year or 2 from now I think is great, because you have just discussed the enormity of adapting to the war in terms of procurement practices. Look what we are asking of the Iraqi people and the coalition forces, to build an army from scratch. The army in the past was loyal to the dictator, not to the people. Buying into civilian control of the military is something not known in the Mideast and we are trying to institute it.

You get paid in cash in the Iraqi army, so you have to take your money and go home and pay your bills. We do not have Sure-Pay. There is no bureaucratic infrastructure to support the military. You are having Sunnis and Shias work together for the first time in a coordinated fashion, maybe in the Kurdish north.

The political task ahead to bring this country together under a written constitution, setting aside a 1,400 year-old religious split between the Sunni and Shia Muslims is an enormous task.

Why is it taking so long? The same reason it took us a long time: It is hard to get people with different views of life to live together. It is hard to get a military to work as a national military, not a group of militia. We are making progress. But if we are there a year or 2 from now, which I think we will be, with a large number of troops suffering casualties, we have to turn this around on message, and we have to do more in terms of recruiting.

General McCaffrey has just gotten back. He has made an observation that we are in a race against time in terms of getting it right in Iraq with our force, that he sees stress on the force, and that time is not on our side. General Myers, what would your answer be to that observation?

General MYERS. I actually outbriefed General McCaffrey after he came back, I asked to see him. He said several interesting things, and I think some of them seemed to be misperceived a little bit. One of the things he said that I thought was good is that morale is terrific. Talking about a "broken Army" that we hear from time to time—this is a great Army. This is the best Army, the best Armed Forces this planet has ever seen.

General McCaffrey through his visit at least, that was his observation as well.

He does worry and he has worried from right after September 11, I think, when we first went into Afghanistan, that to sustain this war we need larger ground forces. I think the way that the Joint Chiefs and the Department have addressed this is increase the size of the Army by 30,000—and increase modestly the size of the Marine Corps—but also addressed all sorts of other internal efficiencies that could make our forces more accessible. That is what Army modularity is all about.

I do not know that folks that are not actively involved in these processes understand them fully or understand what they are going to bring to the table, but I think that it is really, really important that we continue our transformation across all our Services, so we have the availability of these terrific forces for contingencies either current or potential.

Senator GRAHAM. Transformation helps recruiting, retention, and capacity to fight, is that correct?

General MYERS. Absolutely, I think everything we do in that regard is part of it. It relates back to Senator Thune. I think BRAC is part of it; our overseas posture is part of it. It all goes hand in hand. Overseas posture, for instance, one of the tenets that the United States Army had when it thought about its overseas posture and its stateside posture was if we can get more families back to the United States, where we can have more stability with spouses and children, that this is going to increase retention.

So it all goes hand in glove.

Senator GRAHAM. One last question. Is there anything that we are not doing on the Hill to help you win this war that we could be doing?

Dr. CHU. If I might, Senator, it is not that you are not doing it, but I would like to join my colleagues in advocating your continuing to speak out, just as you have done in these last few minutes, about the value of military service, about the importance of military service. As the President said in his speech, it is the high-

est form of public service. Just continuing to offer that message to the American people is one of our most powerful and most effective recruiting tools.

Chairman WARNER. Senator, do you want another question?

Senator GRAHAM. No, thank you.

Chairman WARNER. We will now go into another round of questions. It looks like the distinguished ranking member and myself are here together. This has been a good hearing. We have had a very valuable exchange of information, and I just want to dwell for a minute on this issue of transformation. I am among the strongest of the proponents to have this transformation, but we must not take on that difficult task at a rate that in any way would impede our effort to finish achieving the goals in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Better that some aspects of it be stepped back in time to allow the full resources and energies of the Department to be devoted to bringing about the achievement of the goals, namely to establish a situation of security such that the new governments of Afghanistan and Iraq can have a footing to establish for their people a measure of freedom and democracy. I hope that those that are pacing this keep that in mind.

Second, General, the first Gulf War was a remarkable feat of arms and strategy. We repelled the Iraqi forces in 100 hours, 100 hours, through the extraordinary professionalism of a coalition of forces, primarily led by the United States, and utilizing the equipment that we had at hand at that time of an unexpected event, namely Iraq invading Kuwait.

I think it left us all with a sense of enormous pride, but maybe a bit overconfident as we undertook the second phase of conflict with Iraqi forces. I will leave that to history.

My recollection is that the HMMWV was in the inventory at the time of the first Gulf War, but I am not sure to the extent any of those units were employed in that battle.

General SCHOOMAKER. Sir, the HMMWV was there. We did not even have a term of "up-armored HMMWVs" in those days. They were all unarmored, and there were scores of them involved.

Chairman WARNER. In that operation?

General SCHOOMAKER. Yes, sir.

Chairman WARNER. That is the point I wished to make. You talk about the Army that you took to this battlefield and the shortage of the up-armored HMMWVs and the dramatic pace with which we armored them. Now, presumably the QDR will begin to look at this inventory of weapons today and try and project beyond the conflict in both Iraq and Afghanistan what the threats are in the world that could call upon our forces to be involved somewhere else, in a different battle at a different time. We might have to revert to the fact that the up-armored HMMWV, which loses a degree of mobility, which is an important factor in any warfare, and suddenly we have to revert to the HMMWV as it was originally designed.

I have to assume that at the time that the HMMWV was designed the best minds were put to work on it and the best minds looked at the projected scenarios of battle and, as you say now, it was used and used successfully in its original configuration in the first Gulf War. Now that we have been faced with the second Gulf War, and we had to make a dramatic right turn in terms of trying

to rework this vehicle, first using whatever armor we could put together, I suppose, to create the category threes, then slowly category two, and now we have the evolution of this fully armored HMMWV from the ground-up in design and manufacture.

General SCHOOMAKER. Sir, if I could add. That is why we have the strategy that we do. We are now building only the heaviest HMMWVs, in other words the 1151s, 1152s, which are the heaviest version, strongest engine, strongest transmission, strongest suspension. That is what we are going to do as we go forward.

Second, only a portion of these HMMWVs will be manufactured to the level one specification, because those are the ones that you cannot remove the armor from. Most of our HMMWVs in the future we will build to the level two. The reason is because you can remove that armor and put it back into the configuration that you are describing, so that we can extend the life of these suspensions, engines, and transmissions, and then put that armor on so that—it is basically snap-on, snap-off—providing the same degree of protection where that armor is that a level one HMMWV would provide.

Chairman WARNER. That is something we have to focus on, because I do not want to sit here, if I am privileged to be here many years hence, and be confronted with an entirely new panel of witnesses—the same Senators, a new panel of witnesses—and we are going back through how the equipment for that conflict, whatever it may be—hopefully we will not have one, but if we do—and testimony to the effect that we just simply did not have the right equipment to meet that contingency.

General SCHOOMAKER. Mr. Chairman, if I could add another thing about the first Gulf War. It is not having to do with HMMWVs, but you might remember that the 7th Corps of the United States Army was one of the major corps that was in that fight. That corps was being disbanded at the time the first Gulf War broke out, and it was saved by the first Gulf War and then disbanded after that fight.

When we entered the first Gulf War, we had an Army of over 700,000 soldiers, 200,000 more than we have today. It was during that process that we started bringing it down. There are many, many differences about what we went into that fight with and what we entered this fight with.

Chairman WARNER. On a totally different matter, but one that is of great importance to this committee, we had last week, a series of briefings and hearings really on the status of forces of the Iraqi training program. General Petraeus—chief, you were here. The committee desires to ask the Department of Defense—we have done it in different ways, but I am going to formalize a letter to the Department, that I will acquaint you with Dr. Chu and General Myers. We feel very strongly that we need to declassify to the extent we can, the status of forces of the Iraqi trained force today. What is its readiness, comparable to whichever benchmarks you wish to make, because the American taxpayer put a tremendous investment in that retraining and equipping. I think they are entitled to understand, because from that base of facts as to their degree of readiness we can better translate where we are in terms of

hopefully providing them with trained individuals and the equipment to eventually replace our forces.

I think that information should be in the public domain. There is a great deal of discussion about when we can achieve the goals that our President, I think courageously, has established. But that is an integral set of facts needed for any reasonable translation of how we can achieve those goals.

I would like to now go to the question of the improvised explosive devices (IEDs). We continually monitor this very important issue here in the committee. I would like to start with you, General Hagee. We have through the past 2 years really followed the progression, first of the procedures adopted by the Department of Defense—they now go to the Joint Task Force. General Votel is the head of it.

I want you to describe what has been the structure of the Marine Corps addressing this issue, which I think you have done very effectively. Is that structure still performing as you intended it to perform, or is it to be more fully integrated into the Joint Task Force? I know that it chops to the Joint Task Force now, but it seems to me there is a measure of independence the Marine Corps has had, using their own initiatives and innovations, and I really want to hopefully protect that.

General HAGEE. I am sorry, Mr. Chairman. I did not understand the first part of the question regarding the structure.

Chairman WARNER. I am trying to look at the structure of the various entities within the Department of Defense addressing the serious issue of the IEDs, namely what are we doing by way of research and development; what is the private sector doing; how quickly are we getting the equipment into the field, because it is the IED which is the focal point, frankly, of so much of the concern among the American population with regard to their young people going into this series of conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We understand General Votel's structure. We were briefed on it. He was before us. But the Marine Corps has been doing some independent, innovative work on their own in conjunction with the Joint Task Force, and I ask you, is that still functioning to your satisfaction?

General HAGEE. First off, Mr. Chairman, yes, sir. It is still functioning. We are working very closely with not only the Joint Task Force, but with the individual Services, because we are obviously all in this together. There in the Al-Anbar Province we have the 155th Brigade. So we are all concerned about the IEDs.

At the same time, we are also using our engineering expertise to try to come to solutions, and when we do, just like with the Army, we share that with either the Service or the Joint Task Force or both.

I can also say that we are working with several of our coalition partners who have had experience with IEDs to find out what they have learned, and they are sharing their information with us.

So am I satisfied with the process? Yes, sir, I am. What I am not satisfied with is the speed at which our scientific and engineering community—and I know they are working hard—are coming up with new technologies to address this problem.

Chairman WARNER. That would be the private sector that you are concerned about—or the in-government entities? What is the community to which you refer?

General HAGEE. Sir, I would say all of the above. Not that they are not working hard, but we are just not coming up with, in my opinion, the technologies that we need rapidly enough, for example technologies that would allow us to locate the IED, some sort of sensor that would allow us to locate that IED rather than having to physically see it; technologies that would allow us to set that IED off before we even got there.

The academic community is working on it. The scientific community is working on it. I know the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) is working on it, but we have not had significant success yet, and I would just ask those communities, urge those communities, to continue to work on them.

Chairman WARNER. I just want to make sure that you are satisfied that the work being done in the Corps continues, and it can be done to the extent—working with everybody, but nevertheless you can come up with your own ideas and implement them; is that correct?

General HAGEE. Sir, I am very satisfied with that, and I have to say I am satisfied with the effort that the other communities are putting into it, too.

Chairman WARNER. I thank you. I just have to tell you from a little personal experience that during the Korean War someone in the Marine Corps had the foresight to develop what was called the "Mickey Mouse boot." It was a thermal boot. It was an ugly-looking thing and it was tough to wear and difficult to handle, but it saved Marines from frostbite. The Army units next to the Marine units suffered four times the cases of frostbite as did the Marines because they did not have that boot; they still had the old World War II boot.

I have always been very respectful of what the Corps can do on its own initiative sometimes, and I saw that firsthand.

General Schoomaker, the National Guard and the Army Reserve rely on prior service soldiers to a great extent, who have the training and experience needed to fill the ranks. Increased reliance has been placed in recent years on non-prior service recruits. The failure or inability of these individuals to complete their enlistments seems to be of growing concern.

How big a problem is attrition in the active Army, Army Reserve, and National Guard?

General SCHOOMAKER. Sir, it is a challenge. The Guard and Reserve have long relied upon soldiers that are leaving the Active service to fill their ranks, and of course we are growing the Active Force, retaining more, so that adds to their challenge.

I would say across all of the Active, Guard, and Reserve that first-term attrition is something that we keep a very close eye on, and we remain very concerned about any spikes in that. We have seen a little rise in it, specifically in the initial entry training. Part of the reason for that in my opinion is we have ratcheted up, necessarily, the rigor in the initial entry training because of the things we have to introduce at that stage because of the war that we are in.

But what we have seen is a corresponding decrease in attrition in their first units of assignment. We are hoping as we watch this trend a little bit longer that what we are going to see is a balancing and a maintenance of about what the traditional norms have been. I would like to see it go down, but you are right. Maybe Dr. Chu has a broader view of it.

Chairman WARNER. Do Dr. Chu or Secretary Abell have any comment on that?

Dr. CHU. Attrition, sir, has long been an issue with the military forces. We lose about a third of an enlisted cohort before it completes its normal term of service. About half of that typically occurs in the initial training period. Each Service has advanced some innovative ideas of how to deal with this issue. We are all eager to see better outcomes here.

Charlie, did you want to add a word or two here?

Mr. ABELL. Yes, sir, it is an enduring problem. We have searched for solutions. They are fleeting. We find one and then another pops up. I think the increased rigor is what accounts for the spike we are seeing right now.

Chairman WARNER. I thank you.

On the subject of the Army and Marine Corps capabilities and acquisition programs, although the Army and Marine Corps have different missions and capabilities, there are shared concerns and competencies. We have seen, however, that the Army and the Marine Corps have divergent paths for acquiring equipment, such as helicopters and heavy wheeled vehicles. What are your views regarding the joint development and acquisition of Army and Marine Corps equipment? I will start with you, General Myers. Do you wish to address that? You are in charge of the jointness.

General MYERS. You bet. It is an issue of course that we look at. I think the forum for that, as it is in all of this, is our Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) that looks at the requirements that the Services have and ensures to the maximum extent that is practical and reasonable that we share the same sort of equipment.

The best example that is coming along right now is the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF), which is going to be shared by three Services. When this comes to fruition, it will be the first time we have had an aircraft of such commonality that it can operate off carriers, off land bases, and have a short field takeoff capability that would satisfy one of the components.

Absolutely, it is something that is very important to us. We have recently looked at trucks, for instance, you may be referring to trucks. Trucks is one of the areas where the Marine Corps and the Army have had different procurement paths, but I will let them explain what they are doing to merge those.

Chairman WARNER. All right, then we will start with you, General Schoomaker.

General SCHOOMAKER. Sir, I will talk to it from two perspectives: one as Chief of Staff of the Army; and also as a former combatant commander of a joint command, U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM). So I am quite familiar that we have to have both some separate views, because we have some separate realities. For instance, the Marine Corps has to operate its helicopters off of

ships and so they have some very specific requirements to be able to operate off of those ships. For instance, rotor brakes to stop the rotor blades, and the ability to fold those rotor blades so that they can economize on the space on the deck. Those are not requirements in Army aircraft. Those are expensive additions that we do not require and therefore we do not build.

So we have—going from that level of reality to the fact that the Marine Corps has a requirement for amphibious vehicles, and I am talking about amphibious vehicles that come out of a salt water environment, that we do not have. So there are some differences in how we build trucks, how we build our tracked vehicles, and those kinds of things.

We do have commonality in things like HMMWVs we have commonality in artillery pieces. We have commonality in a variety of weapons systems that we share. Not only that, but the Marine Corps and Army soldiers train at Fort Knox together on tanks. We train together at Fort Leonard Wood, and I believe at Fort Sill, for instance, in artillery.

I think that we have some pretty good economies going on here and we are working together.

Chairman WARNER. What you are saying is indigenous differences between the missions and the equipment have to reflect that. What I want to leave with is the assurance that you think the proper balance is being struck between the need to get as much commonality as we can for cost savings, spare parts, maintenance, training, and at the same time we are respecting those differences.

General SCHOOMAKER. I think that is a true statement. I will go back to the IED question. The IED task force was an Army initiative and we developed that to a point. After about a year, we went to the DOD and asked for them to provide kind of top cover so we could make it a joint program. It is a joint program. All of the Services participate, but the Army maintains the same degree of independence as what you just talked about in the Marine Corps to operate in our specific lane for things that are specific to our needs. Yet we share those in that forum with each other.

Chairman WARNER. Can you wrap up, Commandant?

General HAGEE. Sir, I would just align myself with both you and the Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Understood.

Senator Levin.

Senator LEVIN. I want to go back to the HMMWV issue and the article in the New York Times last Sunday, which had a lot of allegations and statements which it seems to me need to be addressed. I want to insert that article into the record now.

[The information referred to follows:]

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HEADLINE: Safer Vehicles for Soldiers: A Tale of Delays and Glitches

BYLINE: By MICHAEL MOSS

BODY:

When Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld visited Iraq last year to tour the Abu Ghraib prison camp, military officials did not rely on a government-issued Humvee to transport him safely on the ground. Instead, they turned to Halliburton, the oil services contractor, which lent the Pentagon a rolling fortress of steel called the Rhino Runner.

State Department officials traveling in Iraq use armored vehicles that are built with V-shaped hulls to better deflect bullets and bombs. Members of Congress favor another model, called the M1117, which can endure 12-pound explosives and .50-caliber armor-piercing rounds.

Unlike the Humvee, the Pentagon's vehicle of choice for American troops, the others were designed from scratch to withstand attacks in battlefields like Iraq with no safe zones. Last fall, for instance, a Rhino traveling the treacherous airport road in Baghdad endured a bomb that left a six-foot-wide crater. The passengers walked away unscathed. "I have no doubt should I have been in any other vehicle," wrote an Army captain, the lone military passenger, "the results would have been catastrophically different."

Yet more than two years into the war, efforts by United States military units to obtain large numbers of these stronger vehicles for soldiers have faltered -- even as the Pentagon's program to armor Humvees continues to be plagued by delays, an examination by The New York Times has found.

Many of the problems stem from a 40-year-old procurement system that stymies the acquisition of new equipment quickly enough to adapt to the changing demands of a modern insurgency, interviews and records show.

Among other setbacks, the M1117 lost its Pentagon money just before the invasion, and the manufacturer is now scrambling to fill rush orders from the military. The company making one of the V-shaped vehicles, the Cougar, said it had to lay off highly skilled welders last year as it waited for the contract to be completed. Even then it was paid only enough to fill half the order.

And the Rhino could not get through the Army's testing regime because its

manufacturer declined to have one of its $250,000 vehicles blown up. The company said it provided the Army with testing data that demonstrate the Rhino's viability, and is using the defense secretary's visit as a seal of approval in its contract pitches to the Defense Department.

Many officials in the military and the government say the demands of war sometimes require the easing of procurement requirements like testing, and express frustration at the slow process for getting equipment.

"When you have troops in the field in a dynamic environment, where the tactics of the opposition are changing on a regular basis, you have to be nimble and quick," said Representative Rob Simmons, a Connecticut Republican on the Armed Services Committee. "If you're not nimble and quick and adaptable, people will die."

Nearly a decade ago, the Pentagon was warned by its own experts that superior vehicles would be needed to protect American troops. The Army's vehicle-program manager urged the Pentagon in 1996 to move beyond the Humvee, interviews and Army records show, saying it was built for the cold war. Its flat-bottom-chassis design is 25 years old, never intended for combat, and the added armor at best protects only the front end from the heftier insurgent bombs, military officials concede.

But as the procurement system stumbled and the Defense Department resisted allocating money for more expensive vehicles, interviews and records show, the military ended up largely dependent on Humvees -- a vast majority of which did not yet have any armor -- in both combat and noncombat operations in the war.

Today, commuting from post to post in Iraq is one of the deadliest tasks for soldiers. At least 73 American military personnel were killed on the roads of Iraq in May and June as insurgent attacks spiked. In May alone, there were 700 bombings against American forces, the most since the invasion in March 2003. Late Thursday, a suicide car bomber killed five marines and a sailor in a convoy of mostly female marines who were returning to camp in Falluja. Thirteen others were injured. Officials said the vehicles most likely included a seven-ton truck.

Last winter, 135 convoys were attacked on the Baghdad airport road alone, and even the most fully armored Humvee is no longer safe from the increasingly powerful insurgency bombs.

Marine Corps generals last week disclosed in a footnote to their remarks to Congress that two of their best-armored Humvees were destroyed, while a Marine spokeswoman in Iraq said five marines riding in one such Humvee were killed this month in a roadside bomb attack.

Still, thousands of Humvees in Iraq do not have this much protection.

The Pentagon has repeatedly said no vehicle leaves camp without armor. But according to military records and interviews with officials, about half of the Army's 20,000 Humvees have improvised shielding that typically leaves the underside unprotected, while only one in six Humvees used by the Marines is armored at the highest level of protection.

The Defense Department continues to rely on just one small company in Ohio to

armor Humvees. And the company, O'Gara-Hess & Eisenhardt, has waged an aggressive campaign to hold onto its exclusive deal even as soaring rush orders from Iraq have been plagued by delays. The Marine Corps, for example, is still awaiting the 498 armored Humvees it sought last fall, officials told The Times.

In January, when military officials tried to speed production by buying the legal rights to the armor design so they could enlist other venders to help, O'Gara demurred, calling the move a threat to its "current and future competitive position," according to e-mail records obtained from the Army.

Defense Department officials defended their efforts in supplying troops with armored vehicles, saying they have managed to convert a largely unarmored fleet into one in which every vehicle in combat has some level of shielding.

"We are constantly assessing and making the necessary adjustments to make sure they have the best possible protection this country can provide," said a Pentagon spokesman, Bryan G. Whitman, adding that no amount of armor would defeat the insurgency's biggest bombs. He said Mr. Rumsfeld had ridden in many types of vehicles, including Humvees, and "travels in whatever vehicle the commander feels is appropriate."

The Defense Department created a task force last winter that is charged with revamping its entire fleet of light vehicles, including the Humvee.

Some say these efforts, however resolute, will suffer if the Pentagon does not also overhaul its underlying procurement system.

"There's been a confluence of factors that colluded to keep this system hidebound," said Dov S. Zakheim, the Pentagon's comptroller until May 2004. "It's going to take a joint effort by Congress and the executive branch working in good faith, and I underline good faith, to bring about a change."

Old Problems, New Details

By the time an Army National Guard member complained to Mr. Rumsfeld in December that troops were still scrounging for steel to fortify their Humvees, the Pentagon's troubles with armoring vehicles had been years in the making.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of insurgencies more than a decade earlier had changed the dynamics of war for American troops. The problem came into bloody relief in Mogadishu, Somalia, in 1993 when militia members cornered and killed 18 American soldiers who were trying to capture a warlord's top assistants using Black Hawk helicopters and unarmored Humvees.

At an Army command center in Warren, Mich., John D. Weaver saw the events unfold and set out to revamp the light-vehicle program that he managed.

One option came from executives at O'Gara, who proposed adding the extra steel shielding to Humvees. Mr. Weaver praised the effort but foresaw some flaws, he said in interviews.

Because the Humvee's hull is flat, its underbelly absorbs the force of blasts more

readily than combat vehicles with angled bodies.

Moreover, the chassis can carry only so much armor, leaving the rear more exposed.

And while land mines were the biggest threat at the time, Mr. Weaver said his group began worrying about a more insidious one: a fragmentation mine called the M-18 Claymore.

Developed by the United States for the Vietnam War, the device can be remotely detonated to hurl its 700 steel spheres at any part of a passing vehicle -- much like the improvised devices that insurgents are using in Iraq.

That means the armored Humvee is vulnerable to a timed attack that focuses on its underbelly or rear, Mr. Weaver said.

Its box shape also makes it less able to deflect low-flying bullets.

"We need to invest more in the details of the design, to integrate state-of-the-art material, which, while costing more, weighs less and provides greater levels of protection," Mr. Weaver wrote in a paper presented to the Army's 1996 armor conference at Fort Knox, Ky. "Finally, we must overcome the paradigm that wheels are cheap and 'throw away.' The vehicle may be, but the occupants are not."

By 1997, when Mr. Weaver left his post, he was helping draft an Army mandate requiring new vehicles like the M1117. "I'm not sure anybody got their arms around what was needed," he said.

By 1999, the Army began buying a limited number of M1117's. Three years later, it canceled the program.

At roughly $700,000 each, the M1117 is considerably more expensive than the current $140,000 price for an armored Humvee.

"This decision is based upon budget priorities," Claude M. Bolton Jr., an assistant Army secretary, wrote to Congress in 2002. Existing vehicles, he added, can be used instead "without exposing our soldiers to an unacceptable level of risk."

Yet the military was reluctant to mass-produce the armored Humvee, with many in the Army agreeing that the vehicle made little tactical sense.

By the time the Iraq war started, the Army had been ordering only 360 armored Humvees a year.

"We never intended to up-armor all the Humvees," said Les Brownlee, who was the acting Army secretary from 2001 until late last year.

"The Humvee is a carrier and derives its advantage from having cross-country mobility, and when you load it down with armor plating, you lose that."

But just months into the war in Iraq, it was lives the Pentagon was losing, and it reached for the quickest solution.

Clinging to a Contract

What the Defense Department thought would be the easiest option turned out otherwise.

The Humvee chassis is rapidly made on a vast assembly line near South Bend, Ind., by AM General. But before its vehicles can be rushed to Iraq, they are trucked four and a half hours to O'Gara's shop in Fairfield, in southern Ohio -- which had 94 people armoring one Humvee a day when the war began. There, the Humvees are partly dismantled so the armor can be added.

"Clearly, if you could have started from scratch you wouldn't be doing it that way," Mr. Brownlee said in a recent interview.

In February 2004, Mr. Brownlee visited the O'Gara plant and asked the company to increase production, gradually pushing its monthly output to 450 from 220 vehicles. The Defense Department also wanted to contract with other companies to make armor.

Determined to hold onto its exclusive contract, O'Gara began lobbying Capitol Hill. Among those it drew to its side was Brian T. Hart, an outspoken father of a soldier who was killed in October 2003 while riding in a Humvee. Early last year, as a guest on a national radio show, Mr. Hart urged the Pentagon to involve more armor makers. Two weeks later a lobbyist for O'Gara approached him.

"He informed me that the company had more than enough capacity," Mr. Hart says. "There was no need to second-source."

Mr. Hart then redirected his efforts to help the company push Congress into forcing the Pentagon to buy more armored Humvees. With support from both parties, the company has received more than $1 billion in the past 18 months in military armoring contracts.

Meanwhile, the Army did not give up on trying to speed production by involving more armor makers. Brig. Gen. Patrick O'Reilly said several armor companies were eager to be part of a plan to produce armored Humvees entirely on AM General's assembly line.

In January, when it asked O'Gara to name its price for the design rights for the armor, the company balked and suggested instead that the rights be placed in escrow for the Army to grab should the company ever fail to perform.

"Let's try this again," an Army major replied to the company in an e-mail message. "The question concerned the cost, not a request for an opinion."

The Army has dropped the matter for now, General O'Reilly said, adding that he hoped to have other companies making armor by next April.

Robert F. Mecredy, president of the aerospace and defense group at Armor Holdings, the parent company of O'Gara, acknowledged that the company was protecting its commercial interests. But, he said, the company has proved it can do the Humvee work and he blamed the Defense Department for delays. Military officials concede that it sometimes took months for requests made in Iraq to filter through the

Defense Department. O'Gara says it has armored nearly 7,200 Humvees since the war began, and while there is a persistent need for more in Iraq, the company stresses that the Pentagon keeps changing its orders: from 3,600 in the fall of 2003 to 8,105 last year to more than 10,000 today.

Asked why the Marine Corps is still waiting for the 498 Humvees it ordered last year, O'Gara acknowledged that it told the Marines it was backed up with Army orders, and has only begun filling the Marines' request this month. But the company says the Marine Corps never asked it to rush.

The Marine Corps denies this, but acknowledges that it did not get the money to actually place the order until this February. Officials now say they need to buy 2,600 to replace their Humvees in Iraq that still have only improvised armor.

Beyond the Humvee

With insurgents using increasingly powerful bombs and bullets, American troops in Iraq have been looking beyond the Humvee.

When the Marine Corps returned to Iraq last year, it settled on the Cougar as a superior vehicle to perform one of its main jobs: searching the roads for improvised explosive devices, or I.E.D.'s. The Cougar can take more than twice the explosive punch as the armored Humvee and deflect .50-caliber armor piercing bullets. British troops had used the vehicle during the invasion.

The Marines used a new ordering method called the Urgent Universal Need Statement, which allows it to skip competitive bidding, to speed the process, officials said.

Even at that, the Marines Corps took two months to complete a product study, its records show. The contract took two more months to prepare. By then, one of its units in Iraq, Company E of the First Marine Division, was suffering the highest casualty rate of the war; more than half of the 21 marines killed were riding in Humvees with improvised armor or none at all.

When the Cougar order was completed in April 2004, the Marine Corps got only enough money from the Iraq war fund to buy 15 of the 27 Cougars it wanted. "This start-stop game is driving everybody nuts," Michael Aldrich, an executive with the Cougar's maker, Force Protection, said in a recent interview.

Marine Corps officials, who have high praise for the Cougars they have, said they needed to move cautiously for fear of overwhelming the company, which had only 39 workers. It now has 250 and is racing to fill a new order for 122 Cougars, at $630,000 apiece, by next February.

"I think we are moving about as fast as we could move," Mr. Aldrich said. "It's the chicken and egg. If you don't have the order you can't make the investment, and there are extremely long lead times" on the components.

Wars are always tricky affairs for military contractors that are asked to ramp up overnight. But for this and other makers of armored vehicles, the Iraq war has been especially challenging.

To get Congress's attention last year, Mr. Aldrich compiled maps that showed the number of troops from each state who had died in Iraq in vehicles that were inadequately armored.

"I got some very open pupils and a couple of gasps and a couple of questions on who I had showed this to," said Mr. Aldrich, who presented his findings during the fall election campaign when the issue of equipping troops became a focus of intense debate. "The Republicans wanted to know if I showed it to the Democrats, and the Democrats wanted to know if I showed it to the Republicans."

The M1117, made by Textron in Louisiana, had advocates in that state's senators, who told Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker, the Army chief of staff, in a September 2003 letter that the vehicle was superior to the armored Humvee in blast and bullet protection.

Still, the M1117 did not shake off its 2002 cancellation until last summer, when the Army began placing a series of orders totaling 290. The company, which will make 16 vehicles this month, has been asked to more than triple that pace by next March, Textron officials said.

Labock Technologies, which makes the Rhino Runner in Israel, thought it had the best advertising ever. Besides posting photographs of Mr. Rumsfeld aboard the Rhino at Abu Ghraib, the company has pictures of a shackled Saddam Hussein going to court last summer, with the headline: "So safe. some V.I.P. won't ride anything else."

The Defense Department says some military personnel are using the privately owned Rhinos that run the gantlet of bombs on the airport road. But with the Army not accepting the company's test results, and Labock not wanting to destroy a Rhino on the chance of getting orders, some soldiers in Iraq are doing their own lobbying.

Last month, the company says, an Army colonel and two other soldiers at Camp Victory in Baghdad picked up a satellite phone and called Labock at its Florida office to pepper the company with questions about performance, price and how fast it could deliver.

Mark Dunlap, a company executive, said in recounting the exchange, "They said they would run it up their chain of command."

Senator LEVIN. "The Army did not give up," it reads, "on trying to speed production by involving more armor makers. Brigadier General Patrick O'Reilly said that several armor companies were eager to be part of a plan to produce armored HMMWVs entirely on the AM General's assembly line. In January, when it asked O'Gara"—that is the manufacturer—"to name its price for the design rights for the armor, the company balked and suggested instead that the rights be placed in escrow for the Army to grab should the company ever fail to perform. 'Let's try this again,' an Army major replied to the company in an e-mail message. 'The question concerned the cost, not a request for an opinion.'"

Now, the cost that he was referring to there was what would be the cost of obtaining the design rights for the armor so that we could produce HMMWVs a lot more quickly. They never got the cost from the O'Gara company.

Then the article reads: "The Army has dropped the matter for now, General O'Reilly said, adding that he hoped to have other companies making armor by next April."

So, General Schoomaker, is that accurate?

General SCHOOMAKER. Sir, number one, I have not read the article. Number two, I have no direct knowledge of what you are talking about. I heard just before the hearing, and had an explanation, that there was some discussion about whether O'Gara-Hess would release the copyright or whatever the rights so that other people could produce the armor, but I could not comment on the accuracy of that.

Senator LEVIN. Does anybody know the answer to that? General, do you know the answer?

General Myers, have you read the article, the Sunday New York Times front page article?

General MYERS. Senator Levin, I have not read that article, no, sir.

Senator LEVIN. I must tell you I am a little bit surprised. It is a major newspaper. It is a front page article that goes into massive detail about the armor failings. This is a huge article on the subject, and I would urge that you read the article and that you give us an answer for the record. I will address this to you, General Schoomaker, and ask that you give us an answer for the record as to whether or not it is true that the Army sought to purchase the design rights so that we could produce the up-armored HMMWVs a lot more quickly, so that we could protect our troops, and that the company balked. If that is true it would be very disturbing to me, that they would put profit ahead of patriotism. I say, if that is true. I do not want to judge it before we get the Army's answer and before we get the answer from the company.

It is a very serious statement here. We are talking about life and death issues here, and I hope everybody that is either in this room or realizes what the motivation is here of these questions and questioners in trying to get to the bottom of what the shortfalls were in armor. There are a lot of changing needs and requirements. We understand that. There was not planning for a violent aftermath. We understand that. It is a moving train, we understand that.

But, factoring all that in, you still have allegations in this article that a company refused to license someone else to produce the armor which would protect our troops. That is, if true, if true, simply not acceptable.

General Schoomaker, we would rely on you and General Myers. I guess I will look mainly at General Schoomaker for this, although you may want to also give us an answer for the record.

General SCHOOMAKER. Sir, it is proper that Secretary Bolton, our acquisition executive, provide it for the record and we will get that, because we are the executive on this.

[The information referred to follows:]

On January 5, 2005, the Army requested O'Gara-Hess and Eisenhardt (OHE) to submit a cost proposal for procurement of the Up-Armored High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV) Level III Technical Data Package (TDP) with unlimited data rights. OHE was advised that this request was being made for informational purposes only; however, that the government's intent was to obtain a price for a TDP complete enough for any firm to manufacture the current M1114. In addition, OHE was requested to provide, along with the cost proposal, a timeline for providing a complete competitive TDP.

On January 14, 2005, Anthony Crayden, OHE, provided an informal response to the government's request for a Level III TDP cost proposal. In their response, OHE voiced their concern about proprietary rights, but did propose an escrow arrange-

ment for the government to acquire the TDP data. The government response requested a cost proposal; however, a formal cost estimate was never received from OHE.

The Army is no longer pursuing the purchase of the M1114 TDP as our production of the M1114 will end in the February 2006 timeframe as we transition to a long-term armor strategy for the M1151 and M1152.

Senator LEVIN. All right. Let me ask you, General Hagee, did you read the article?

General HAGEE. I have read the article, sir.

Senator LEVIN. Here is what the article says about the Marine Corps. It says: "Asked why the Marine Corps is still waiting for the 498 HMMWVs that it ordered last year, O'Gara acknowledged that it told the Marines that it was backed up with Army orders and has only begun filling the Marines' request this month. But the company says the Marine Corps never asked it to rush. The Marine Corps denies this."

Did you ever ask O'Gara to rush this order?

General HAGEE. Sir, when we requested those 498 vehicles we knew that the company was producing vehicles for the Army. The United States Army gave us 498 vehicles with the proviso that once we got our vehicles that we would return those vehicles to them.

Senator LEVIN. But the question is, did you ask O'Gara to rush production?

General HAGEE. I will have to take that for the record, sir. I do not know.

Senator LEVIN. Would you do that?

[The information referred to follows:]

The Marine Corps Systems Command has made multiple requests of O'Gara-Hess to expedite production of M1114s. More specifically, during September/October 2004, Barry Dillon, Deputy Commander, Marine Corps Systems Command spoke with John Mayles, O'Gara-Hess Vice President for Business Development regarding this matter. Mr. Dillon contacted Mr. Mayles for confirmation of production levels and for available forecasts of first available delivery for the Marine Corps of the M1114s. Mr. Mayles confirmed first deliveries would be June/July 2005.

Chairman WARNER. Excuse me, Senator. On that point, the Senator and I will be forwarding a letter to the Secretary of Defense that we would like to have the Secretary review this article and make comments on it as to its accuracy for the committee. So we will be formally requesting it. The article struck us as being a very comprehensive review, and it took several positions which we would like to have the DOD have the opportunity to give its perspective.

Senator LEVIN. It is a highly disturbing article. Let us leave it at that. We need to get the answers from the military's perspective and from the company if they want to comment on that. I would suggest that the letter that we write to the Secretary of Defense, that we send a copy of that letter to the company so that they can also comment on that, because I must tell you, when we have defense contractors we expect that they will put patriotism ahead of profit. They can license others to produce these vehicles and to armor them, and if they were asked to do that and refused to do that then I think they have a lot of explanation, as far as I am concerned, to a lot of families in this country.

I am going to leave it at that because I want to hear from them and give them a chance to respond.

Now, General Schoomaker, I want to ask you about the readiness numbers. We have testimony this morning from General Hagee relative to the Marine Corps. I do not know if this was in his prepared statement, and I do not think that these numbers were used in your oral testimony, but if they were I will repeat them here so you can give us your comparable numbers.

This is on the bottom of page 3—"Current operational tempo has had an impact on unit readiness. Since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom, overall unit readiness for battalion and squadron sized units has dropped by 40 percent. Our readiness priority remains support and sustainment of our forward-deployed forces, at the immediate expense of those units who have rotated out of Iraqi Freedom. As a consequence, the readiness of the force not deployed has decreased."

Is that true also in the Army?

General SCHOOMAKER. I would say yes, sir. I think that is an accurate statement. I do not know—I cannot sign up to the percentage. That is the Marine Corps's percentage. But I will be glad to give it to you for the record.

Senator LEVIN. I think it would be very important that we have that in the record. It seems to me that is—I was not here when Senator Reed was asking questions, but I think that is clearly the point here, that the unit readiness has dropped because of the reasons which were given here. But nonetheless, they have dropped.

So my question to you, General Schoomaker, is this: Has the percentage, without giving me the specific percentage because you do not know, of the units in the Army at the highest readiness level decreased overall?

General SCHOOMAKER. I will have to give you that for the record, but my belief is our Army is more ready than it was before.

Senator LEVIN. I understand that, but I want to know in terms of these——

General SCHOOMAKER. I will have to give it to you for the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

A temporary decline in measured resource levels after redeployment is normal and expected. Declines are primarily due to equipment losses, the unavailability of equipment undergoing maintenance, and personnel transitions. Along with resetting returned units, the Army is also transforming units into brigade-based modular, combined arms teams that increase Army capabilities for full spectrum operations. The increased number and conversion of brigades to more capable Army modular force designs is placing additional demands on the Service for both equipment and personnel. Units reporting against Army modular force organizational structure may initially report lower readiness levels (due to increases in "denominators" for equipment and personnel), but are as capable, or more capable, than they were before conversion.

Senator LEVIN. We do keep readiness levels. We get them every quarter. We do it for a reason. We have gotten readiness information from the Army, from the Marine Corps, and the information that we have is that the overall readiness levels have dropped. That is the information we have. If that is not right, we have to know. That means the information that you have sent us is wrong.

Now, the Marine Corps has given us a specific percentage. But the reports that we got from either the DOD or the Service is that

the overall readiness of both the Army and the Marine Corps has declined over the past year. I am not asking you for the specific numbers. I am asking you whether the percentage of the highest ready units has dropped, and that is something you will give us for the record.

General SCHOOMAKER. Let me answer it this way and then we will give you the specific percentages. We have more units than we had 2 years ago, more brigades.

Senator LEVIN. That is why I am asking percentage. That is why I am asking percentage.

General SCHOOMAKER. Of those brigades, we have taken some of them totally off line to reset them. So I would say the answer is yes, the readiness level has dropped that way, but we actually have more capacity and that capacity is far more ready than the capacity that we had previously.

We will give you the numbers. I think it is a true statement to say that the war and transformation and everything else we are doing, the movements we are doing, have dropped the percentage of readiness. But what we have ready is very ready, and we can deal with what it is that we have been asked to deal with.

Senator LEVIN. So the percentage that is ready is very ready, but overall the number of units that are very ready has dropped?

General SCHOOMAKER. Correct.

Senator LEVIN. That is helpful. It is reassuring, but it is helpful to get a direct answer on that.

Now, our staff was briefed last week about the prepositioned tanks and Bradley Fighting Vehicles that we would use in the event of combat in Korea that are fully mission-capable. Apparently a significant percentage of the prepositioned tanks and fighting vehicles that we would use in such an event are not fully mission-capable; is that correct?

General SCHOOMAKER. First of all, we ought to talk about that in a different hearing or a closed session.

Senator LEVIN. That is why I did not use the percentage.

General SCHOOMAKER. Let me say this generically. We are doubling the size of that prepositioned stock. We are taking what is there and putting it through depot level reset so that it is very ready.

Senator LEVIN. I got that, I got that. But my question is whether or not a significant percentage of the prepositioned tanks and Bradley Fighting Vehicles that we would use in that event are not fully mission-capable. That is my question.

General SCHOOMAKER. Once again, it depends upon whether your baseline is what we are growing to or what we used to have. If you are talking about what we used to have, there is no change. If you are talking about what we are growing to, the percentage would be less because we are doubling the size of the stock.

Senator LEVIN. Then we need to get both figures.

General SCHOOMAKER. Yes, sir.

[The information referred to follows:]

The information contained in this response is classified and was provided in a briefing on July 21, 2005, to committee staff.

Senator LEVIN. Okay. General Myers, the President said the other night that as Iraqis stand up, we will stand down in Iraq.

That was his statement. So irrespective of when troop reductions may occur, I would like to know what the decision criteria are, since he announced a very specific path relative to, as Iraqis grow in capability, we will stand down.

Here is my specific question. How many Iraqi battalions, approximately, will need to be judged capable of operating independently of U.S. forces for the standing down to begin? There has been a statement in the press that 3 Iraqi battalions are fully capable out of I believe 80. Putting aside the accuracy of that—and that may be a classified number; that is why I quote a press statement—what percentage would you say of the Iraqi units will need to be capable of acting independently and operating independently in order for the standing down to begin? Give us a rough estimate, since the President laid out that path?

General MYERS. I think it is going to depend on where we are, in what part of the country. It goes back to General Casey's strategy, which I think he outlined partly in here, that as the Iraqis stand up and given the conditions in the part of the country you are talking about, it will enable some of this to happen faster than later. I am going to have to go back to General Casey and look at what his estimate would be, if there is a percentage we can put on that.

The fact is we want to have 100 Iraqi security force army battalions ready. I do not have the chart in front of me, but it is somewhere over 30 that are ready to do that today. One of the problems we have with the chart you have seen before is that there is some ambiguity about what the various readiness ratings mean, and we are busy trying to make sure that it is sharp and clear, that it makes sense to you, and that it makes sense to the American public, if that is appropriate to declassify and get out to them.

There is a lot of ambiguity about what those ratings mean. I have had long discussions with General Abizaid and General Casey about that. The plan is that we will stand up over time. Events will drive that, of course, but we will stand up over time as Iraqi units become more capable. It will depend on what part of the country they are in and the specific units. I have a pretty good sense of that, but to try to make a percentage out of it, we have not calculated it that way so I do not want to make a guess here.

Senator LEVIN. I think it would be very important that we get some material that would support that kind of a policy, so that there is some meat on the bones. It is one thing to say as Iraqis stand up we are going to stand down. But I would assume that that is based on a military calculus that as the direction of the Iraqi units are standing up and there are more that are mission-capable, that we will be removing forces. I assume the President had some kind of a military basis for his statement. I would like to know what that basis is, what it is based on, and what those criteria are, if you could supply those for the record.

General MYERS. You bet. It is based on General Casey and General Abizaid's strategy and it is——

Senator LEVIN. You can provide that for the record? Can you give us some detail?

General MYERS. We will try to do that, yes, sir.

[The information referred to follows:]

[Deleted.]

MNF–I is now working with the Iraqi Prime Minister through a joint committee to transfer security responsibility. This ongoing process will refine the conditions necessary to transition security responsibility from coalition forces to the ISF.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you very much. General Hagee, in terms of the HMMWVs and the Marine Corps, I think what you have said is your goal is that they all be ones and twos. The Army's position is that there is going to be a group of vehicles which are going to have the armor which is bolted on the sides, so that it can be unbolted in more routine environments.

Are the Marines going to change to that strategy, which means there is going to be some threes.

General SCHOOMAKER. Sir, the vehicles that we will build at O'Gara-Hess, you cannot snap the armor off. That is solid.

Senator LEVIN. You are going to make it so you can snap the armor off, but you are going to keep the underbody strong?

General SCHOOMAKER. That is correct.

Senator LEVIN. Are the Marines going to shift to that strategy, or are you going to change to your making them all ones and twos?

General HAGEE. Sir, we are looking very closely at what the Army is doing with the 1151s. I personally believe that we need to go to a bolt-on, bolt-off type of configuration. I would like to see us go to some composite type of material in the future, rather than using the same type of armor we are using right now. But bolt-on, bolt-off I believe is the way to go.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you.

One last question, Mr. Chairman, with your indulgence here. Dr. Chu, what is the current Department policy about calling up members of the Guard and Reserve after they have been mobilized once?

Dr. CHU. Let me emphasize the difference between units and individuals, because individuals change in units, so we may see units called up a second time even though individuals are not.

Second, let me emphasize that every mobilization decision is carefully scrutinized by the military department involved, by the Secretary's staff, and by the Secretary himself to be sure we have the right balance of meeting the combatant commanders' needs in the appropriate way and ensuring we do it with the most thoughtfulness about our people.

That all said, with one exception, the Secretary has not been prepared to approve the remobilization of any individual involuntarily who has already served his or her time in theater. He has on occasion, when there is a compelling case for that skill, approved the remobilization of individuals who have served briefly in the United States. This typically involves units that were called up right after September 11 or units called up, for example, to support the 4th Infantry Division that did not go into Iraq as planned, and those people were demobilized promptly thereafter.

I should also emphasize that we are always delighted when people volunteer for additional mobilization. I am actually very proud of our Reserve Forces in all the Services about the number of volunteers that have, in fact, come forward in this process.

Senator LEVIN. So as I understand your answer, then, with one exception, did you say? Did I hear you correctly, the report was one exception to the rule?

Dr. CHU. There is, to the best of my recollection—and I will let Mr. Abell check my recollection—only one exception where the Secretary approved the remobilization of individuals who had already served their time in theater.

Senator LEVIN. Where they did not volunteer?

Dr. CHU. When they did not volunteer, that is right.

Senator LEVIN. Was that a unit or was that individuals?

Dr. CHU. That was a unit and it was composed of individuals who had already served.

Senator LEVIN. One unit which was called up involuntarily. Other than that, unless people volunteered to be called up, after they have been mobilized once there is no involuntary mobilization a second or a third time?

Dr. CHU. Let me be more precise, sir. The Secretary has approved remobilizations for units that were called up briefly, units and individuals called up briefly, served in the United States and demobilized. The one exception I am speaking to is people, a unit and individuals, who went to Central Command, served in Central Command, came back, were demobilized; that unit was remobilized.

Senator LEVIN. So let me see if I understand this. The one exception you are talking about is where a unit had been—there is more than one exception for units that have been briefly mobilized in the United States; they have been remobilized involuntarily. But in one case where a unit served in theater, they also were remobilized. Have I stated that correctly?

Dr. CHU. You did, sir. I would emphasize that the number of times that we have remobilized involuntarily individuals who served briefly is small.

Chairman WARNER. What is the parameters of "small"?

Dr. CHU. I would have to give the exact numbers for the record, sir, but it is a small proportion of the total, less than 10 percent.

Senator LEVIN. Does that mean just a few times, a few units, or a small proportion?

Dr. CHU. It is both a small number of units and it is not a large number of people, either.

Chairman WARNER. You will provide the specifics for the record, then.

Senator LEVIN. That would be great. Thank you so much.

[The information referred to follows:]

To ensure judicious and prudent use of the Reserve components, the Department of Defense employs a very rigorous process to authorize remobilizations. Voluntary remobilizations are encouraged and approved by the Secretary. Fewer than 260 personnel from elements of the 4th Marine Division who previously served in Iraq were involuntarily remobilized to support continued combat operations. Additionally, involuntary remobilization of individuals have included only members who either previously served in the continental United States providing force protection or who served at the mobilization station, and that total represents less than 1 percent of the total forces mobilized.

Chairman WARNER. I say to the panel, we have had a very good hearing and we leave this hearing with the understanding that some of the solutions rest on Congress to help you in terms of your

recruiting, and hopefully the American public. I commit to you, as I am sure all of us will, to give it our best effort, because I do not know who could say it better than the President: the highest public service is that of those who wear the uniform. I think he probably meant the first line of fighters also here, our fire and police and others, but certainly wearing the uniform is the highest form of public service.

Anyone else have any comments that they feel they should like to make for this record? [No response.]

If not, thank you very much, the hearing is adjourned.

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN

NATIONAL CALL TO SERVICE

1. Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Abell, I agree with General Pace. Our military leadership must do more to encourage our young people of America to serve. The National Call to Service (NCS) is one way to attract 17–22 year olds for shorter periods of military service with a considerable lump-sum payment to pay college tuition costs. In addition the legislation allowed for transition incentives if the NCS enlistee stays for longer periods of military service. Secretary Abell, we worked together to craft the final legislation that was approved by the President. Current DOD statistics show that fewer than 3,000 people have been recruited under this program since it was authorized in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003. In addition, various college surveys still list as a major detractor for military service the long enlistment contracts—8-year enlistment contracts—for first term enlistments. Please update the committee on the NCS enlistment program and should we do more to encourage military service through this program—as General Pace and I believe?

Mr. ABELL. The Department of Defense initiated the NCS enlistment option on October 1, 2003, with all four Services participating. Although the program is new and it is too early for evaluation, we are pleased with its beginning and are enthusiastic about the program. It is offering young Americans an opportunity to serve in the military who would normally not serve due to the length of traditional enlistments. Additionally, NCS is helping the Reserve components by providing high quality servicemembers with current Active-Duty experience.

The Department recruited 1,916 NCS participants in fiscal year 2004. Through June 2005, the Department has recruited 2,435 young Americans under this enlistment option: 108 in the Army, 1,938 in the Navy, 145 in the Marine Corps, and 244 in the Air Force.

The Army's relatively low number is mitigated by two factors. In an effort to study the impact of NCS on the enlistment of high-quality youth, the Army originally limited the program to 10 recruiting battalions. However, in May of this year they opened the program nationwide. Additionally, the Army is finding that most who meet with recruiters concerning NCS opt for a longer enlistment when they see the more lucrative incentives offered for such enlistments.

As for doing more to encourage military service, we welcome any assistance in our efforts to explain the virtues and nobility of such service to the American public, regardless of whether it is under the NCS program or any other enlistment option.

RETENTION AND RECRUITING

2. Senator MCCAIN. General Schoomaker and General Hagee, as a total force, recruitment numbers have been down. Despite this month's figures, the Army has missed their recruitment goals by nearly 8,000. The Marines are still struggling. Guard and Reserve numbers are off by 15,000. What are your Services' plans to try and rectify these recruiting difficulties?

General SCHOOMAKER. The Army developed and implemented a recruiting action plan in August 2004 that increases resources across all Army-controlled recruiting "levers." Those levers include the number of recruiters, incentives, and advertising funding. Resourcing has increased across all three components. We have also leveraged solid retention efforts to offset accessions shortfalls. Progress is continually monitored and adjustments are made accordingly. Recruiting difficulties are of national importance and not just an Army issue. The lower propensity to serve that

we are currently challenged with, is a product of the improving economy and lower unemployment, in addition to possible public perceptions regarding the global war on terrorism. These factors induce negative feedback from influencers of potential recruits.

General HAGEE. The Marine Corps has thus far exceeded its accession requirement for fiscal year 2005, shipping 24,936 compared to a goal of 24,491 as of the end of June 2005 (102 percent of the requirement). We have fallen short of our self-imposed contracting objective (those applicants that enter the Delayed Enlistment Program) 30,227 compared to a goal of 31,181 (97 percent of the objective). As we all know, this reflects a tougher environment. On a positive note, aside from meeting our accession requirement, quality has continued to be above our standards with 95.80 percent of our accessions being high school graduates and 70.70 percent falling within the Mental Group Category I–IIIA. We continue to attract the highest caliber of individual.

We have taken a series of measures to include increasing our advertising funding, addressing advertising efforts on key influencers, and reviewing our processes. We will meet our fiscal year 2005 accession requirement, and foresee continued challenges in recruiting for fiscal year 2006.

JUNIOR OFFICER RETENTION

3. Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Abell, General Myers, General Schoomaker, and General Hagee, in a recent New York Times article, West Point graduate Lucian Truscott, the grandson of a World War II General, reported on the growing issue of junior officer retention. He found, time and again, that many had decided to resign from Active-Duty at the end of their commitment. One said: "I'm getting out as soon as I can." Another young man who has seen duty in Bosnia, Afghanistan, and Iraq said: "I know I'm going to be coming back here a year from now. I want to get married. I want to have a life. But I feel like if I get out when my commitment is up, who's going to be coming here in my place? I feel this obligation to see it through." These statements highlight some unique issues. Our constant deployments, many of which are a year in length, are beginning to wear on the force. I applaud this second young man's apparent desire to see this conflict through, but understand that he may still choose to leave the service. The first officer's statement though, if it is at all representative, greatly concerns me. I know that many servicemembers have spent more than 1 year deployed as a result of this war on terror, and while I know it is difficult, if not impossible, to reduce the deployments at this time, I encourage you to consider what can be done to retain these combat experienced junior officers and would appreciate your comments on this issue.

Mr. ABELL. The Army is currently exceeding junior officer retention historical norms, and junior officer retention in the other Services is not experiencing any adverse effects. Nonetheless, the demand for forces to support operations in Iraq and Afghanistan makes reducing stress on the force one of the Department's highest priorities. We are employing a two-pronged strategy to attempt to reduce the requirement for forces, while at the same time increasing the efficiency in the supply of forces that are called upon to deploy.

The strategy to reduce the requirement for forces—and reduce the stress on the force—includes efforts to develop the Iraqi capacity to conduct police and other security tasks; to seek increased international military participation in Iraq; and to increase actionable intelligence to disrupt attacks on coalition forces and other threats to security. The increasing efficiencies in the current force include such initiatives as increasing jointness to gain synergy and lethality, rebalancing the Reserve and Active component mix, realigning skill sets to meet higher demand areas, better management of mobilization and demobilization, more efficient use of contractors, better use of volunteers and incentives to extend deployments, and more.

Through a combination of efforts to reduce demand, and increased efficiencies in the supply of forces, we seek to keep stress on the force within acceptable levels. We continue to monitor recruiting and retention metrics closely to ensure solid progress is achieved, and our focus will not be diminished as long as demand for forces remains high.

General MYERS. Current stresses on the force are significant and will remain so for the near term. Although we would like to retain every officer and enlisted member who has served our Nation proudly, reality is that some of our best and brightest will make a decision that they have performed their service and depart to become valued members of our civilian community. Right now, indications are that we do not have a retention problem with our junior officers—they remain within historical standards. However, we will never take this good news for granted and will con-

tinue our efforts to make the military a profession of choice. We also offer new accessions a compensation and benefits package that is competitive with the civilian sector. In the end we'll appeal to our junior officers that although we place heavy demands on them and their families, the stakes for our national security couldn't be higher and there has never been a more important time to serve. We will also continue to ensure that our junior officers receive the best education, training, and leadership opportunities available; provide them challenging jobs with opportunities to excel and advance; and ensure they know that their service to our Nation is valued and essential during this time of war.

General SCHOOMAKER. The Army has analyzed junior officer attrition behavior and is implementing programs to retain our highly motivated and combat experienced officers. Company grade attrition for fiscal year 2005 is projected to be 8.1 percent which is below the historical average of 8.4 percent. The Army is planning to offer a menu of multiple incentives to each officer upon promotion to captain. The top retention incentive for these officers, from our most recent officer survey, is full time attendance at graduate school. Based on this input, the Army is expanding graduate school opportunity from 400 to 1,000 seats per year. This will help retain our young officers returning from combat, educate them in needed areas such as Middle Eastern Studies and provide an operational break. The second most desirable incentive is monetary. The Army is considering providing across the board continuation pay in return for an obligation to extend Active-Duty service. However, continuation pay for Army officers requires a legislative change in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007. The Navy is currently using continuation pay for surface warfare officers and the Army desires similar authority for its junior officers. The Army is also leveraging desirable items such as branch, posting and stabilization to increase retention. If available, the Army will match the officer's desires in return for an additional service obligation. These incentives are low cost and may increase satisfaction for both the soldier and their family. A commander's officer retention toolkit is also being developed to assist our leaders in providing information about benefits, incentives, and retirement. Officer retention is a leadership issue and all levels within the chain of command are energized to keep these superb officers, who have performed so magnificently, in our great Army. Additionally, increased promotion rates and changes in career management may decrease attrition of junior officers. An officer now will have the opportunity to change career fields after 4 or 7 years of service as opposed to the previous decision at 10 years. This may help retention by providing an opportunity to change career goals and will also spread these combat experienced officers among all career fields.

General HAGEE. The Marine Corps is not currently experiencing a retention problem in its officer corps, although manpower planners continue to look for any indicators that would show higher attrition in the future. Between fiscal year 1999 and fiscal year 2003, the Marine Corps' overall retention rose from 89 percent to 93.8 percent. In fiscal year 2003, officer retention was at a 19-year high. In fiscal year 2004, officer retention returned to the historical average of 90.8 percent and the Marine Corps ended the fiscal year with a 91-percent retention rate (9.0 percent attrition rate). With 2 months remaining in fiscal year 2005, the officer retention rate is at the historical norm of 90.8 percent (9.2 percent attrition rate). Retention forecasts for fiscal year 2006 indicate that the current trend will continue. However, should fiscal year 2006 retention drop below the desired rate, the Marine Corps is prepared to target specific qualifications and skills through both monetary and nonmonetary tools. Monetary tools already in place include aviation continuation pay, and law school education debt subsidy. The Marine Corps has developed a plan to offer a critical skills retention bonus should it be required. Nonmonetary tools include lateral moves from 'over' MOSs to short MOSs, interservice transfers, and return to Active-Duty from the Marine Corps Reserves. These different tools provide incentives to officers for continued service even in the face of significant operational tempo, while allowing flexibility to manpower planners to meet requirements across the Marine Corps total force.

The Marine Corps Reserve is similarly not experiencing officer retention problems in the Selected Reserve at this time. Officer retention in the Selected Reserve for the first 9 months of the fiscal year was 84 percent, well above the historic norm of 78.8 percent. Reserve manpower planners continue to monitor officer retention and are alert for any changes to the current trend. While officer retention in the Selected Reserve remains strong, the Marine Corps Reserve continues efforts to recruit company grade officers to meet vacancies in the combat arms specialties. The affiliation bonus passed in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005 remains a strong tool in assisting in this effort.

ARMY PERSONNEL END STRENGTH

4. Senator MCCAIN. General Schoomaker, in this year's submission of the Army budget, the total end strength proposed for the next several years is 482,400. Congress has approved and the President authorized an increase of 20,000 with temporary authority given last year to add another 10,000. What disturbs me and many members of this committee is the Army's apparent desire to fund only the 482,400 in the base budget. As we continue to debate the overall size of the Army, including another 20,000 we will vote on this year in the 2006 Defense Authorization Bill, when can we expect the Army to begin to budget for these increases in the base budget, rather than relying on supplementals?

General SCHOOMAKER. The Army programs its payroll budget to end strength guidance provided by OSD. The DOD is currently reevaluating force structure requirements for the Army and all Services as part of the QDR. At this time, the Army has not received instructions to budget for a base force beyond 482,400.

5. Senator MCCAIN. General Schoomaker, additionally, we have been briefed that the Army intends to keep as many as 10,000 on Active-Duty using Stop Loss. With this war continuing to impact both retention and recruitment, do you foresee a time in the near future when the Army can begin to reduce and potentially limit the use of Stop Loss?

General SCHOOMAKER. The focus of Army deployments is on trained and ready units, not individuals. Stop Loss is the policy that effectively sustains a force which has trained together, to remain a cohesive element throughout its deployment. Consequently, the commitment to pursue the global war on terrorism and provide our combatant commanders with the cohesive, trained, and ready forces necessary to decisively defeat the enemy, require us to continue the Active Army and Reserve Component Unit Stop Loss programs currently in effect. Stop Loss is not about numbers, it is a temporary measure that does not permanently affect the Army's end strength and has not been a key planning element in determining or growing the force.

We fully understand DOD guidance to the Services is to discontinue Stop Loss policies as soon as operationally feasible. However, there is not a specific end date for the Army's current use of Stop Loss. The size of future troop rotations will in large measure determine the levels of Stop Loss needed in the future.

Maturation of the Army initiatives of modularity, restructuring/rebalancing the Active component/Reserve component (AC/RC) force mix, and the stabilization criteria associated with converting units to their force stabilization design (3-year life cycled managed units) will, over time, alleviate much stress on the force and will help mitigate Stop Loss in the future. The proposed smaller overseas footprint associated with fixed long and short tours, coupled with reduced deployment requirements, will also reduce the need to fully employ the Army's Stop Loss policy.

Clearly, Stop Loss is an issue with soldiers that are affected. Although a small number of soldiers have gone public over their concern with Stop Loss, it appears the great majority of soldiers affected understand the need to keep trained, motivated, and cohesive teams together. All three components are doing extensive surveys and sensing sessions with our soldiers to get their feedback and insights. To date, there has been much discussion of concerns over issues such as deployments and family stress; however, Stop Loss does not appear to be an overbearing retention issue.

6. Senator MCCAIN. General Hagee, the Marine Corps is not using Stop Loss at this time. How do you work around the need to retain unit cohesiveness during deployments without using Stop Loss?

General HAGEE. We maintain unit cohesiveness without the use of Stop Loss through the management of our personnel assignments. The Marine Corps Teaming initiative assigns entry-level school graduates to their new units in groups from the same graduating class. Our junior officers and staff noncommissioned officers are assigned to maximize their time in the unit with the goal of a minimum of two deployments. Our senior commanding officers are selected by a Command Selection Board and assume command prior to the unit pre-deployment workups. Finally, the Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs has completed an extensive personnel analysis and, beginning in October 2005, our current 90-day stabilization deadline for marines being assigned to their deploying units will be increased to 120 days. Overall, the unit cohesion program is accomplishing its goal of keeping intact teams of marines who have trained and fought together as a combat-ready force. The Marine Corps views Stop Loss as an extreme measure to increase forces rapidly, as was needed for Operation Iraqi Freedom I, not as a tool for sustaining the force to meet current global war on terrorism needs.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JAMES M. INHOFE

ARMY FUTURE COMBAT SYSTEM

7. Senator INHOFE. General Schoomaker, the Army is trying to modularize, modernize, recapitalize, reorganize, and fight a war all at the same time. Many people don't believe we have the resources to do all this at once and that the Army will fall short. I have a concern that as we focus on our current force we will lose focus on the future force. The Army has canceled over 29 systems in the last 4 or 5 years leaving them with one major system for the future: the FCS. There has been a lot of discussion about the FCS and the Army's ability to deliver manned ground vehicles (MGVs) meeting the current costs and schedule, and most importantly, with the kind of survivability and lethality required for future combat. Are you confident in the Army's ability to deliver the FCS set of MGVs without shortcomings in survivability and lethality, in accordance with the current costs and schedule?

General SCHOOMAKER. I share your concern that we cannot lose focus on the needs of the future Army. The Nation faces a period of prolonged and persistent global conflict. While we cannot predict the future, we know that future enemies will seek to deny us the positions of military advantage that we have used successfully in the past. We will require improved survivability, lethality, sustainability, maneuverability, and situational awareness. We must provide our soldiers with the tools they need so that they never face a fair fight. With the help of Congress, the Army has moved out to restructure the Army to grow the capability that our soldiers need in today's fight and provide for the capability that future environments will demand. By the end of fiscal year 2006, we will have grown the Army combat capability by nearly 10 brigades and reorganized it into a more deployable, lethal, and joint capable force. Adaptable soldiers and leaders are already demonstrating the improved capabilities of the current modular force on the battlefield. The FCS strategy provides the material component of the modular force capability as our central modernization effort. Our ability to spin-off technology into the modular force as it matures accelerates our modernization. I am confident that we are on glide path to deliver the FCS set of MGVs as a key component of the system of systems capability that the FCS strategy is providing. MGV tests are on track and demonstrating today the range of capabilities that we seek. Capabilities such as the 120-millimeter lightweight cannon, the Non-Line-of-Sight Cannon (NLOS–C) and the 3D-millimeter cannon are but a few examples. The 120-millimeter lightweight line-of-site cannon is doing very well in test firings at Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG), Maryland. A breach-mounted mortar is also test-firing at APG, while the NLOS–C is firing at Yuma Proving Ground, Arizona. The 3D-millimeter cannon for the infantry vehicle is the same weapon that will be used by the Marine Corps and Navy and is undergoing type classification of munitions today. There are various active protection systems, close-in active protection systems being developed and tested. Some of them are successfully bringing down rocket propelled grenades right now. If you look at the unmanned aerial vehicles, the class-four Fire Scout is successfully flying right now for the Navy and the Army, and the first-generation of underground robots, known as UGBs, the PacBot, is being used in Afghanistan to search caves and in Iraq to identify IEDs. We have developed a flexible and adaptive strategy designed to sustain the current force and meet the emerging threats of the future. We are on schedule and with the continued support of Congress we will maintain an Army capable of accomplishing today's missions and field a future force well prepared to meet future challenges.

8. Senator INHOFE. General Schoomaker, will this family of vehicles give you that leap-ahead capability the Army desires?

General SCHOOMAKER. We are a nation in the first stages of a prolonged global conflict. Our enemies are adaptable and will undoubtedly seek to avoid our strengths and exploit our weaknesses. We believe for instance that future enemies will seek to deny us the positions of military advantage that we have used successfully in the past. As we look to the capabilities that we seek for the future modular force, we have identified some capability gaps in our current capability that we seek to fill with our modernization effort. The FCS strategy encompasses all aspects of technological modernization of the Army to provide projected gains in survivability, lethality, situational awareness and reduction of operating and maintenance costs while reducing the logistical footprint. I am confident that we are on glide path for the FCS strategy and the MGVs to give us the leap-ahead capability that we will need for the current and future modular force.

RECRUITING AND RETENTION

9. Senator INHOFE. General Schoomaker and General Hagee, one of the most interesting comments I have heard lately came from General Casey when asked about recruiting and retention. He said: "We have never had to recruit an all volunteer Army during a long shooting war before." He went on to say we are learning as we go. General Casey also pointed out, and I find very interesting and quite heartening, is that retention amongst soldiers who have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan is at a higher rate than those who have not deployed. This tells me that those soldiers get it. They understand what we are up against, understand the enemy, and understand our mission—its value and importance. Secretary Hall was in my office recently and we talked about recruiting and retention. In the past the saying was "you recruit a soldier and you retain a family". Admiral Hall pointed out that now we need to recruit the family in many cases. Negative media reports and constant criticism that undermines the perception of support for our troops seem to be having a very negative affect on our ability to recruit. As the numbers indicate, once the soldier or marine sees first hand what we are accomplishing and why we are there, he understands what needs to be done and why it is so important. The numbers seem to support this. Army retention is about 104 percent of your goal in all components—Active, Reserve, and National Guard. Marine retention is also on or above the goals set. However, both the Army and Marine Corps have had trouble recruiting new members. What are we learning about recruiting an Army and Marine Corps during a shooting war?

General SCHOOMAKER. The global war on terrorism, lower propensity to serve, and negative feedback from influencers, coupled with the improving economy and lower unemployment rates, have combined to present a very challenging recruiting environment. We are finding that it takes more resources to maintain our forces and expand them, than we ever anticipated. To offset these challenges, the Army has increased its resources dedicated to recruiting. However, we reiterate that today's youth have a broad set of opportunities to choose from. These choices do not necessarily include serving as a soldier. This is not only an Army issue, but more importantly, a national issue. We must communicate to today's youth that service to our Nation remains critical for the Nation's security and well-being. As Army and national leaders, we must ensure that today's youth fully comprehend how important and rewarding service to our Nation can be for them and their country.

General HAGEE. What we are learning about recruiting during a shooting war is the importance of ensuring our recruiters have the tools to reach out to family members and community leaders who influence the decisions of those interested in military service. Recruiting is affected by much more than media reports and criticism. We have learned that it takes much more time and effort to recruit marines in the current environment. More important today is the active role of the influencers in the decision making process. We have made a conscientious decision to ensure they are part of our process.

10. Senator INHOFE. General Schoomaker and General Hagee, how do we transfer the positive can-do attitude that our veteran soldiers and marines possess into the minds of our young men and women so that they understand and desire to serve?

General SCHOOMAKER. The key point is communication. The Army is diligently working to get our message out to the public and the Nation's youth. We are doing so in several ways, such as advertising and through our soldiers and our leaders. We shape our advertising messages for the Nation's youth and influencers to address the value of being a soldier. We are also providing more recruiters to the accessions effort. In addition, soldiers are currently dedicated to assisting recruiters in their hometowns and local communities. This program is called the Special Recruiter Assistance Program. These soldiers, as well as many of our recruiting force, are veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Our soldiers are doing very well in communicating to the public. We also appreciate America's leaders' continued support in speaking on behalf of, and with our soldiers, the proud service they perform on a daily basis. Developing and strengthening the can-do attitude and desire to serve remains a national issue.

General HAGEE. We are all painfully aware the recruiting environment is extremely challenging right now for all of us. We aggressively capitalize on all available resources, to include our veteran marines in the community. The Marine Corps will continue to send only the best-qualified marines to serve on recruiting duty. These highly-qualified marines will be tasked with seeking out and enlisting the best and brightest of our young Americans. They will represent the Corps' best.

MEDIA AND IRAQ

11. Senator INHOFE. General Schoomaker and General Hagee, for a very long time I have been concerned about the media's reporting of what is going on in Iraq. In my trips there, I have found that the whole story is not being portrayed. The positive results of our military's work and the hard work of the U.S. Government as a whole to restore freedom to Iraq has been trampled over by reporters more focused on trying to find ways to diminish the work our young men and women are doing there rather than portraying a balanced view by reporting on the many key successes they have accomplished.

Before one of my previous trips, I was fortunate to come across an article in World Tribune.com written by Lieutenant Colonel Tim Ryan, a battalion commander with the First Calvary Division in Iraq. He led troops into battle in Fallujah late last year and was involved in security operations for the recent election. I also spoke to this courageous, dedicated American soldier. Being on the ground in Iraqi hot spots, he is best able to reflect what is actually occurring there. Listen to his words: "The key to the enemy's success is use of his limited assets to gain the greatest influence over the masses. The media serves as the glass through which a relatively small event can be magnified to international proportions, and the enemy is exploiting this with incredible ease. There is not good news to counteract the bad, so the enemy scores a victory almost every day."

I could go on and on. I am disturbed that soldiers like Lieutenant Colonel Ryan do not feel we are winning the public relations war. He is right. Distorted, negative news both here at home and in the Middle East score victories for the insurgents.

Last Thursday, we heard very much the same story from Secretary Rumsfeld, General Myers, General Abizaid, and General Casey. Opinion polls are showing that more Americans are questioning our operations over there, and I think that's due in large part to the biased media coverage.

We've just started to hear that our troops are beginning to ask whether the American public has the will to support them in their noble efforts. Are you beginning to hear these questions from your soldiers and marines?

General SCHOOMAKER. Due to modern communications technologies like the Internet, today's deployed soldiers have more access to information from home than any soldiers in our Nation's history. Today's deployed soldiers know how critical our current military operations are to the future security of the United States; therefore, when they see news stories about recent polling showing any erosion of support in American public opinion, they are naturally concerned and have expressed those concerns to me.

General HAGEE. First, I'd like to thank you very much for your very strong and extraordinary support to our men and women in uniform. Our marines, sailors, soldiers, and airmen know full well that you are behind them. It's very important for our marines to know that the American public is behind them also and I don't think that's in question. The marines I've talked to know that the American public appreciates their sacrifice in serving our great Nation and understand the great effort being put forth to assist Iraqis in establishing security in their country. There is no shortage of people who actively show support for our troops and the fight against terrorism with notes and care packages sent to the troops, scholarships for family members, support for our injured servicemembers, grassroots fundraisers, benefit functions, family appreciation events, and much more. Our deployed marines certainly recognize and appreciate this outpouring of support. Nevertheless, our marines are not oblivious to the fact that all segments of the American public do not support the political goals of the government that has sent them into harm's way. They also understand that Americans are perfectly justified in disagreeing with the means by which their government attempts to achieve its goals, which is the very freedom our troops will fight to the death to protect for others. I have not seen any indication that our troops don't believe the American public supports them. However, our marines, sailors, soldiers, and airmen are, after all, human beings with hopes and dreams of their own. They want to know that the American people are behind the government that is sending them into harm's way.

12. Senator INHOFE. General Schoomaker and General Hagee, is there concern about the American public's support?

General SCHOOMAKER. The support of the American people is vital to the ultimate success of our ongoing military operations. When our soldiers deploy, they are confident that the American public, regardless of their differing political views, supports every soldier working to protect the citizens of this great Nation on a daily basis.

General HAGEE. First, I'd like to thank you very much for your very strong and extraordinary support to our men and women in uniform. Our marines, sailors, soldiers, and airmen know full well that you are behind them. It's very important for our marines to know that the American public is behind them also and I don't think that's in question. The marines I've talked to know that the American public appreciates their sacrifice in serving our great nation and understand the great effort being put forth to assist Iraqis in establishing security in their country. There is no shortage of people who actively show support for our troops and the fight against terrorism with notes and care packages sent to the troops, scholarships for family members, support for our injured servicemembers, grassroots fundraisers, benefit functions, family appreciation events, and much more. Our deployed marines certainly recognize and appreciate this outpouring of support. Nevertheless, our marines are not oblivious to the fact that all segments of the American public do not support the political goals of the government that has sent them into harm's way. They also understand that Americans are perfectly justified in disagreeing with the means by which their government attempts to achieve its goals, which is the very freedom our troops will fight to the death to protect for others. I have not seen any indication that our troops don't believe the American public supports them. However, our marines, sailors, soldiers, and airmen are, after all, human beings with hopes and dreams of their own. They want to know that the American people are behind the government that is sending them into harm's way.

13. Senator INHOFE. General Schoomaker and General Hagee, is this negative media coverage one of the reasons we're struggling with recruiting numbers in your branches?

General SCHOOMAKER. The media coverage has accentuated the negative, and we know a lot of good that is being done by soldiers goes unreported. To the extent that the news media focus on military casualty information, there is a negative impact on recruiting. We believe that influencers, such as parents, may hesitate to support their child's decision to enlist because of the perceived risks of injury and death.

General HAGEE. Today's environment is challenging for recruiting. A number of factors contribute to the environment such as: current operations, world events, increasing the recruiting numbers, and an improving economy. Specifically, we have seen an increase in the amount of time it takes to enlist an individual. This additional time is spent working with both applicants and their parents, addressing the opportunities and benefits of serving in the Marine Corps. It would not be fair to say that negative media coverage has solely affected our recruiting numbers. Although the media has continued to cover the role of the Marine Corps in the current global war on terrorism, the American people, to include the media, have always recognized the Marine Corps as a tough, smart, elite organization and marine recruiters continue to sell that same message today.

14. Senator INHOFE. General Schoomaker and General Hagee, how are we combating this negative media coverage in the recruiting office?

General SCHOOMAKER. We are taking proactive steps to provide alternative sources of information in recruiting offices to mitigate negative media coverage. For example, we provide monthly talking points down to the recruiting station level, on a variety of topics, and take special care to include talking points about positive progress in Iraq and Afghanistan. We also forward the Headquarters, Department of the Army's "Stand To" newsletter to our brigades and battalions, for forwarding to the recruiting companies and recruiting stations. Our very best means to counter misinformation is our soldiers themselves. We use soldiers who are Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) veterans in the Special Recruiting Assistance Program by bringing them to our recruiting stations to share their first-hand experiences within the local community. Further, an overwhelming majority of our detailed recruiters are now OIF and/or OEF veterans. We are also planning a series of televised local townhall meetings across the country. We will bring together small panels of soldiers of various backgrounds (officer, noncommissioned officer, enlisted) and parents of soldiers to answer audience questions about the Army and what it means to be a soldier.

General HAGEE. As previously stated, we have not seen significant negative media coverage of the Marine Corps or the marines fighting the global war on terrorism. The coverage has shown the realities of how tough this fight is and the sacrifice that is required. Well before the events of September 11, 2001, our recruiting message was and continues to emphasize that marines are trained to fight and win against our country's foes. We remain confident that this message will continue to resonate allowing us to continue to succeed in recruiting marines that are needed to fight and win while the country is at war.

RECONSTITUTION OF FORCES

15. Senator INHOFE. General Myers, General Schoomaker, and General Hagee, I am concerned about the capabilities of our military units who have been engaged in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom and those units getting ready for the next contingency as they rotate back to their home bases. Many units will return to their home units without the equipment they took to the war because that equipment was still needed in theater by the men and women coming to replace the troops who were rotating out. So there will be no equipment or less equipment to train with once they are back at their home station; or, they will be bringing home equipment that underwent untold stress operating in the Southwest Asia environment, in some cases with regular servicing inspections delayed or waived in the interest of the mission. We need to ensure ongoing training so that our military can maintain its readiness for the next contingency. What is the DOD's plan to meet these shortfalls or limitations in equipment needs?

General MYERS. The Services, in coordination with the Joint Staff, are continuously developing return and/or replacement plans for military equipment in theater. When feasible, equipment transfers or reimbursements are taking place between units relinquishing equipment to units taking possession upon arrival in theater. Where equipment shortages exist due to operational wear and replacements are scarce, the Joint Staff is assisting in the prioritization of requirements to return and/or replace equipment from several sources, such as pre-positioned stocks, to mission-ready condition without sacrificing the necessary training of deployable forces.

General SCHOOMAKER. As units redeploy from the theater of operations, the Army will continue to reset the force to meet future requirements. The goal is for all returning Active-Duty units to achieve a sufficient level of combat readiness within 3 months of equipment arrival at home station. When equipment shortages exist, the Army is reallocating equipment from lower priority units or from current production, if available, to fill voids. Replacement of equipment is imperative to ensure the units will be able to train for future deployments.

Active component units undergoing modular transformation are provided 180 days to complete their reconstitution and reorganization to ensure a return to high readiness. Reserve component units will likely take longer to achieve the desired readiness level. The working assumption is that Reserve units will take 1 year to reestablish pre-deployment readiness after equipment returns to home station. Our Reserve component formations are experiencing a little personnel degradation upon their return home station; therefore, efforts are being implemented to reorganize them into modular units and supply sufficient equipment for these units to provide depth to our available forces.

Readiness involves three essential components: people, equipment, and training. It is only by addressing our soldiers' needs, reconstituting our organizational equipment, reorganizing and training to standard on our collective combat tasks that units will return to an acceptable readiness level. The goal is to culminate these intensive reconstitution efforts by conducting a certification exercise at one of the combat training centers. By adopting such an aggressive approach, the Army will continue to ensure its ability to meet the combatant commanders' near-term requirements.

Further, both the U.S. Army Forces Command and the National Guard Bureau are in the process of redistributing equipment to ensure the proper amounts and types of equipment are available to permit training to standard. They are also cooperating to ensure our governors have adequate equipment on-hand to support our homeland security, homeland defense, and military support to civil authorities responsibilities. In addition to the intense maintenance efforts by Army installations, Army Reserve and Army National Guard maintenance organizations, the Army Material Command has an aggressive depot maintenance program to rebuild and refurbish equipment that was stressed beyond its useful life. Finally, funding for new equipment as replacement or to support modularity is providing much needed modernization for our aging fleets.

General HAGEE. The Corps remains engaged to address the shortfalls of Marine Corps units. The Strategic Ground Equipment Working Group (SGEWG) was established in August 2004 to specifically engage this issue; membership includes representatives from the Marine Forces (MARFOR), Logistics Command, Systems Command, Combat Development Command, and Programs and Resources Department, and the individual Marine Expeditionary Forces. The charter of the working group is to take action on equipment readiness issues for the Marine Corps. To date, the SGEWG has formally met on five different occasions to address these specific equipment deficiencies for units returning to CONUS.

The SGEWG has initiated the following actions to source MARFOR deficiencies:

1. Cross-leveling. Business rules were developed based on input from the SGEWG members and the MARFORs. They are:

For Active Component units:

Priority 1 units (within 6 months of deploying to global war on terrorism)

Goal—equip to 90 percent of Table of Equipment

Priority 2 units (all other units)

Goal—equip to 75 percent of Table of Equipment

For Reserve component units:

Priority 1 units (within 6 months of deploying to global war on terrorism)

Goal—equip to 100 percent of Table of Allowance

Priority 2 units (all other units)

Goal—equip to 85 percent of Table of Allowance

Marine Forces Pacific and Marine Forces Atlantic each published internal cross-leveling guidance based on the SGEWG business rules. Both MARFORs are currently executing. The business rules are recognized as goals and in many cases cannot be met due to equipment availability/density. The intent is to ensure that units have the equipment necessary to conduct training to prepare them for their next rotation into the theater. MARFORs submitted shortfalls by priority unit on 15 Nov 2004. The SGEWG continues to explore and develop executable sourcing solutions for the MARFOR shortfalls.

2. The individual MARFORs have conducted internal redistribution in order to support the training of units within a 6-month deployment window.

3. Some of the identified equipment shortfalls were sourced through the fiscal year 2005 supplemental. Any known unfounded requirements will be requested via the next funding opportunity as appropriate.

The Marine Corps will continue to address deficiencies across the Corps to ensure that all units have the capability to conduct training in order to prepare their marines for current and future operations.

16. Senator INHOFE. General Myers, General Schoomaker, and General Hagee, yesterday at his nomination hearing to be the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Peter Pace estimated that it would take upwards of 2 years from the conclusion of U.S. operations in Iraq to reconstitute. What would you ask of this committee to ensure our military is reconstituted to prepare for future threats?

General MYERS. The Joint Staff would ask Congress to fully support requested funding, including supplemental funding, in order to fully reconstitute our equipment and facilitate the Department's preparation for future threats.

General SCHOOMAKER. We greatly appreciate the understanding and support of the committee in providing supplementary funding for the global war on terrorism. Supplemental funding has been the key to maintaining readiness and provisioning throughout the fight. Continued support of the base budget and supplemental requirements is necessary to maintain the required state of readiness to prosecute the global war on terrorism.

General HAGEE. The Marine Corps has prepared preliminary resetting the force estimates and we have been briefing the committee staff on an ongoing basis as to those evolving requirements. I concur with General Pace's estimation that it will take at least 2 years after the conclusion of operations in the Area of Operations to reconstitute. I ask for the committee's continuing support of our supplemental funding requests in which we have begun to address our resetting the force requirements. Replacement and repair of equipment that has attrited or is rapidly approaching the end of its useful life due to the high OPTEMPO and harsh environmental conditions in both Iraq and Afghanistan are critical if the Marine Corps is to maintain unit readiness, restore our prepositioned stock, and conduct adequate pre-deployment training.

17. Senator INHOFE. Secretary Chu and Secretary Abell, as a follow-up to my previous question on equipment status, how has the global war on terrorism impacted the readiness status of the personnel themselves?

Dr. CHU and Mr. ABELL. Our soldiers and marines are currently better prepared and ready than at any time in our recent history. They are battle hardened, combat tested, and able to accomplish the missions asked of them. There are certain occupational areas that do require specific attention, e.g., military police, civil affairs, and Special Operations Forces, where more capacity is needed. The Department is addressing this need with several initiatives to include rebalancing the force between

the Active and Reserve Forces, conversion of military to civilian positions to free up more military personnel, and joint solutions where each Service can contribute in non-traditional areas to ease the stress on the force and even the workload among the Services.

18. Senator INHOFE. Secretary Chu and Secretary Abell, what will it take to reconstitute these smart, competent, and dedicated service men and women?

Dr. CHU and Mr. ABELL. As experienced service men and women return to their home stations after deployment, they are able to share the valuable knowledge and experience they have gained with new servicemembers coming into the Service and with those preparing to deploy. They will provide valuable leadership within the tactical units as well as experienced trainers to support the combat training centers and the Joint National Training Capability. This will allow the Department to maintain a high level of competency and proficiency across the force.

19. Senator INHOFE. Secretary Chu and Secretary Abell, what concerns can we expect, regarding reconstitution, and how do we best prepare to address these concerns?

Dr. CHU and Mr. ABELL. All of the Services have developed executable plans to ensure forces returning from current operations are reconstituted and postured to ensure continued support for our current and future operations. For example, as brigades return from Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom, the Army is transitioning them into the new modular Brigade Combat Team structure. The brigades then go through a cycle of maintenance and training to prepare them for future operations. The Services are moving to a new force management model: the Air Force Air Expeditionary Force, the Naval Fleet Response Plan, and the Army Force Generation Model. This will improve the ability of our forces to respond and to reconstitute once have done so.

BUDGET NEEDS

20. Senator INHOFE. General Schoomaker and General Hagee, this question is not designed to erupt into a turf battle; however, it may invoke such a response. The land combat component of the joint force is currently under tremendous stress. These rotations in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as numerous other smaller operations around the world are very costly possibly jeopardizing future modernization. Are we adequately funding your Service?

General SCHOOMAKER. Congress has been very supportive of Army requirements throughout this period of tremendous stress. Supplemental appropriations have funded incremental costs associated with military operations, sustained our transformation efforts, and allowed us to begin to reset our force. Your continued support will be essential. In addition to funding the costs associated with rotations to Iraq and Afghanistan, we estimate we will require continued supplemental funding to reset for the force for at least 2 years beyond the end of the conflict.

General HAGEE. To a degree we have been able to protect our future modernization plans by requesting the repair or replacement of equipment attrited or damaged in global war on terrorism through supplemental funding. However, the unfunded bill to completely reset the Marine Corps to the capabilities which existed before September 11, 2001, is growing exponentially with each passing month. This jeopardizes our ability to maintain funding for both essential modernization and global war on terrorism operations.

It will take, in my judgment, a minimum of 2 years of supplementals after the cessation of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan to reset the Marine Corps. In the absence of such funding our modernization efforts would have to become the primary source for resetting the force.

21. Senator INHOFE. General Schoomaker and General Hagee, do we need to increase your shares of the pie?

General SCHOOMAKER. Although relative Service shares of the base budget have remained fairly constant, the Army has received by far the largest share of supplemental funding. In effect, it's a bigger pie and the Army has an increased share at this time. Without the additional funding, it would be impossible for the Army to sustain military operations, continue the transformation to the Army modular force structure, and reset our force.

General HAGEE. Decisions regarding resource allocation within the DOD are very carefully assessed by the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff. A balanced approach has been adopted in that process to ensure that the most urgent

needs are addressed without sacrificing longer term departmental objectives. The budget requests, including supplemental funding, the DOD submits to Congress reflect those decisions.

22. Senator INHOFE. General Schoomaker and General Hagee, how important are the emergency supplementals you have projected for fiscal year 2006 and fiscal year 2007 to your ability to sustain and reconstitute your force?

General SCHOOMAKER. The fiscal year 2006 and fiscal year 2007 supplementals will be critical to sustain military operations and to reconstitute the force. We will require supplemental funding to cover the incremental cost of military operations, our increased Active component end strength, and, in fiscal year 2006, our investment in Army modular forces. We estimate we will require continued supplemental funding to reconstitute our force throughout the period of conflict and for at least 2 years after.

General HAGEE. The fiscal year 2006 supplemental request we are currently developing will be critical in maintaining the resetting the force efforts we began with the funding received in the fiscal year 2005 supplemental. Due to production leadtimes and the continuing impact global war on terrorism operations are having on our ground and aviation equipment, we must continue to procure replacement equipment to sustain current operations without further degrading training and readiness throughout the Marine Corps.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR SUSAN COLLINS

ADEQUATE EQUIPMENT

23. Senator COLLINS. General Hagee, according to a Marine Corps Inspector General assessment of ground equipment in Iraq completed in May 2005, and delivered to this committee last week, Marine Corps units fighting in some of the most dangerous territory in Iraq do not have adequate weapons, communications gear, or properly outfitted vehicles. The report notes that because of the extensive theater in which the marines are operating and the specific mission for the forces, the standard "T/E sets," or metric that determines what equipment is needed, is "not sufficient for the Marine units." The report continues, "the force requires additional capabilities in mobility, engineering, communications, and heavy weapons assets regardless of the size of any specific element of the Marine Air Ground Task Force."

I would like to note that throughout the report, the dedication and resourcefulness of our marines are repeatedly and deservedly praised. But in my view, we have failed them if we are not providing adequate long-term assessments of what resources—whether it is machine guns, armor, vehicles, or communications equipment—our troops need.

Such a report should prompt a reevaluation of our efforts to arm and supply our troops. One fine member of my staff is in the Marine Corps Reserve and served a tour in Iraq this past year. I want to be sure that we are providing our Marine Corps and all troops with the resources they need to perform their duties. What measures have been taken to ensure that our troops have adequate communications gear, vehicles, protection, and weapons that they need?

General HAGEE. You are correct; the standard table of equipment (T/E) set is not adequate. Over in the OIF theater of operations, the Marine Corps is not adhering to the T/E, but to the Equipment Density List (EDL). The EDL is a task-organized T/E that provides the operating force with everything they require and is based upon their mission analysis. That EDL is significantly more than the T/E with more than twice the HMMWVs and significantly more weapons and communications. The intent of the statement from the report was to point out this disparity between the way we are used to operating and how we must operate in the austere environment of OIF. We are supplying the marines deployed forward with the equipment they need to accomplish the mission—they validate the EDL quarterly and their requirements as the combat environment matures and changes, due to the opposition's emerging tactics, becomes the Marine Corps' priority.

24. Senator COLLINS. General Hagee, are you concerned by the findings of this Marine Corps Inspector General report?

General HAGEE. The report validates our concerns: That OIF's austere, combat environment requires a greatly increased equipment list with increased capabilities throughout the deployed force. The harsh conditions and combat operations have accelerated the deterioration of our ground equipment. This report has provided me

with an assessment of the effectiveness of our equipment replacement and rotation plan and pinpointed areas where we need to provide more support.

25. Senator COLLINS. General Hagee, are you exploring how to implement the report's recommendations through 2006 and beyond?

General HAGEE. Yes. The Marine Corps has done and is doing the following:

- Conducted a Force Setting and Equipment Conference;
- Approved the EDL and developed sourcing solutions for OIF EDL deficiencies;
- Captured unfunded requirements for inclusion into the fiscal year 2006 supplemental;
- Developing a plan to globally source remaining OIF EDL deficiencies; and
- Sourcing the executable portion of the Principal End Item rotation plan with available equipment sources. The fiscal year 2005 supplemental was used to source a portion of this requirement; we are looking at other solutions and will address this issue in the August Strategic Ground Equipment Working Group conference in Albany, GA.

MARCENT or HQMC will conduct an annual assessment of the equipment deployed to OIF. Further, the Marine Corps Inspector General will deploy assessment teams into theater every 9 months and provide a report on equipment condition/status.

26. Senator COLLINS. General Hagee, why are we are having trouble adequately arming and supplying our marines?

General HAGEE. Our marines in OIF/OEF are adequately armed and supplied. They are the focus of effort in the global war on terrorism. Because of the conditions in those theaters of operation, they require considerably more equipment; in communications, mobility, and weapons, more than twice in some areas from what our units are outfitted. We have had to draw from forces back in garrison and from our strategic supplies to fully outfit our forward deployed forces. This has created some shortfalls back home which are being mitigated through a cross-leveling of our assets and ensures that those units preparing to deploy have the equipment necessary to train.

SERVICEMEMBERS TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN LIFE

27. Senator COLLINS. Secretary Chu and Secretary Abell, a GAO report issued in May assesses how the U.S. Government helps servicemembers transition to civilian life. The report discusses the Transition Assistance Program (TAP), which is jointly administered by DOD, the Department of Veterans' Affairs, and the Department of Labor. The program offers pre-separation counseling, employment workshops, a session on veterans' benefits, and, for those in need, a session for disabled veterans. The report notes that improvements are especially needed in transition assistance services for Reserve and National Guard members. Given the rapid demobilization of Reserve and National Guard members, they participate in abbreviated versions of the program and generally do not have time for any employment preparation. The GAO report urges that DOD, Department of Veterans' Affairs, and the Department of Labor work together, with DOD as the lead, to improve outreach to members of the Reserve and National Guard. Are you familiar with this recent GAO report?

Dr. CHU and Mr. ABELL. Yes, the Department is familiar with the recent GAO Report GAO–05–544, "Military and Veterans' Benefits: Enhanced Services Could Improve Transition Assistance for Reserves and National Guard," and we are taking appropriate steps to address GAO's recommendation.

28. Senator COLLINS. Secretary Chu and Secretary Abell, how do you plan to implement the recommendations of this GAO report?

Dr. CHU and Mr. ABELL. The Department has formed an Interagency Demobilization Working Group consisting of representatives from all three agencies to review and assess TAP and the demobilization process. They will report to the senior leadership of DOD, Department of Veterans' Affairs, and Department of Labor with recommendations for implementation.

29. Senator COLLINS. Secretary Chu and Secretary Abell, is DOD prepared to handle the growing number of former Active-Duty servicemembers who will need assistance from the TAP?

Dr. CHU and Mr. ABELL. Yes, the Department is committed to supporting former Active-Duty servicemembers who need assistance from TAP.

RECRUITING PRACTICES

30. Senator COLLINS. Secretary Chu, Secretary Abell, and General Schoomaker, I would like to address the issue of recruiting practices. Let me say that I salute the fine work of our military, and I fully understand the importance of having a strong recruiting program to bring young people into our Armed Forces. However, we need to be sure that recruiters are not under so much pressure that they use unprofessional tactics to encourage young people to join. I would like to bring to your attention the case of a constituent of mine from Maine. He wrote to me that he is a firm supporter of our military and of our President. He joined the Army Reserve, in fact. But his experiences with Army recruiters were less than professional. I don't want to get into the details of his specific case, but I do want to hear your reaction to some of his allegations. My constituent wrote that some Army recruiters:

- Coach potential recruits on how to best complete enlistment questionnaires;
- Promote fast weight loss programs in order to encourage potential enlistees to get down to the acceptable limit; and
- Encourage cessation of drug use so that tests can be passed without broader counseling or screening of illegal drug users.

This constituent concluded, "recruiters are far more worried about losing a recruit than they are about getting quality persons for the Army. It is my opinion that the Army needs to relax the standards on recruits and increase them on recruiters." What safeguards are in place to ensure the professionalism of recruiters and recruiting practices?

Dr. CHU and Mr. ABELL. We will share your concerns with the recruiting commanders. We assure you that the Services take the issue of unprofessional conduct very seriously and have the appropriate safeguards in place to remedy violations and forestall future occurrences. Each Service has an office that provides recruiter oversight regarding misconduct and unethical behavior. Recruiters found guilty of violating the standards are generally punished under the Uniformed Code of Military Justice.

Each of the Services understands the importance of recruiting with integrity and being professional. Each Service utilizes focused training, implements sound policies, and fosters a professional culture to instill a sense of professionalism in their recruiter force. Army leadership recently displayed this resolve by conducting a 1-day "stand down" on May 20, 2005, for recruiters to discuss the standards and to reinforce their importance to the mission.

We would be glad to investigate any specific cases you are prepared to share with us.

General SCHOOMAKER. Army values guide our recruiters to do the right thing when no one is looking, just as any other soldier or leader on the battlefield. We have an Enlisted Standards Program in place to maintain oversight of our recruiters and to identify trends that might indicate problems. We track new recruits through initial entry training and their performance is linked back to the recruiter who enlisted them. We investigate all allegations of recruiting impropriety and take appropriate corrective actions as needed. Since 1999, less than 1 percent of recruiters assigned have been relieved as a result of a recruiting impropriety. The U.S. Army Recruiting Command held a command-wide Army Values Stand Down on May 20, 2005 to restate our commitment to achieving our recruiting mission with the utmost professionalism and adherence to Army values.

31. Senator COLLINS. Secretary Chu, Secretary Abell, and General Schoomaker, are unreasonable demands being placed on recruiters to achieve unrealistic quotas?

Dr. CHU and Mr. ABELL. The current recruiting environment clearly presents a challenge for our recruiters, but we believe the demands placed on them are realistic and achievable. Through your continued support, we have been able to provide them with additional resources to help reduce the burden. We have found that the single greatest tool in reducing the demand on individual recruiters is to better man the recruiting force and, in response, both the Army and the Marine Corps have increased their recruiter manning. We will continue to monitor the expectations levied on our recruiters, and the resources provided them.

General SCHOOMAKER. Recruiting an All-Volunteer Force is challenging, even in the best of times. Today's environment, characterized by low unemployment, a decline in the propensity among influencers to recommend military service, and a general lack of public support, makes recruiting a very challenging task. We have increased the number of recruiters commensurate with the increase in recruiting goals to mitigate the demands of the mission. Given the current environment, the level of effort required of the individual recruiter is significant, but no more demanding

than what is being asked of soldiers around the world. We are an Army at war, and we must provide the Army the number of new soldiers that it requires. That is our mission, and we can do no less.

32. Senator COLLINS. Secretary Chu, Secretary Abell, and General Schoomaker, has the situation damaged the professionalism of our recruiting practices?

Dr. CHU and Mr. ABELL. Any time a recruiter violates the trust of his or her organization and the people they are sworn to protect, it calls their professionalism into question. While every infraction is serious, media coverage of these infractions distorts the size of the issue. Few news stories are written about recruiting success, or about the recruiters who uphold our high expectations. Our recruiters, with very few exceptions, are an outstanding group of professionals performing a vital mission for their country. The contributions that these recruiters make to their communities and country are vital to maintaining a truly professional force. We solicit your assistance in giving prominence to their fine performance.

General SCHOOMAKER. No. Our recruiting practices are intact and as professional as ever. The majority of recruiters conduct themselves with integrity everyday. Although there was media coverage of a few recruiters who allegedly violated our recruiting regulations, we do not believe that there was any widespread damage to our recruiters' reputation as a whole. We continue to receive many positive comments from proud parents and influencers, complimenting our recruiters for their professionalism and care in assisting their sons and daughters through the enlistment process. We believe the public knows that we are a values-based institution and that despite the actions of a few, Army recruiters live and work in accordance with Army values.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ELIZABETH DOLE

FAMILIES OF SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN

33. Senator DOLE. Secretary Chu and Secretary Abell, in General Schoomaker's opening statement he mentioned that he is "examining how to best expand support for veterans and National Guard and Army Reserve soldiers." I would offer that in North Carolina we have a very successful pilot program called the Citizen Soldier Support Program that partners with DOD programs to link existing community services with families' needs. Is there anything the Department is doing across the Services to support the families and thereby reduce stress on our deployed Guard and Reserve servicemembers?

Dr. CHU and Mr. ABELL. The Department facilitates family support during sustained operations in the global war on terrorism and other contingencies. Taking care of families is a top priority for the Department.

The Department and Services operate over 700 family assistance centers around the world to enhance family support. Approximately 400 of those are National Guard Family Assistance Centers. Programs include education, training, outreach, and personal support.

A variety of options keep military families and servicemembers in direct contact, including e-mail, telephone cards, and videophone access. Military OneSource gives access to professional advisors and referral services via toll-free numbers and the Internet, 24 hours a day. A number of Web sites have been established that address all aspects of military life and deployment. Military and civilian community-based resources provide professional, non-medical, readjustment and family counseling, including education and referral services. The Department provided $53 million, over 2 years (fiscal years 2003 and 2004), from supplemental funding to help families manage work schedules while one parent is gone and to offer time to take care of other family business. This money provided extended child care to cover additional work shifts, opened centers for additional hours, subsidized in-home care, created "satellite homes" in which centers and homes share care, and located spaces for those geographically isolated from military installations.

34. Senator DOLE. General Schoomaker, in your opening statement I was heartened to hear you acknowledge the strain on soldiers' marriages and families. You mentioned that you are "tracking numerous metrics to ensure that we meet the needs of those that serve and their loved ones." What are these metrics?

General SCHOOMAKER. Individual programs report statistics based on utilization and use surveys and questionnaires to determine rates of success and identify where improvements are needed. Examples of these metrics would include:

Army OneSource (AOS): A division of Military OneSource, this is a 24-hour, 7 days-a-week, toll free information and referral telephone service available worldwide to Active-Duty, Reserve, and National Guard military members, deployed civilians, and their families. AOS provides information ranging from every day concerns to deployment/reintegration issues. Total contacts made to AOS as of June 2005 was 96,652. These contacts include phone, e-mail, in-person counseling sessions, and on-line visits. The top three issues for in-person counseling sessions are emotional well-being of couples, depression, and family relationships accounting for over two-thirds of the total sessions. Overall satisfaction for these services was extremely high. Over 88 percent of the customers were positively impacted by their services, over 96 percent were satisfied with in-person counseling, and over 99.5 percent found the overall quality of online services and educational materials to be excellent.

Because chaplains are mostly embedded in Army units, much of the counseling they do is informal and not reportable. However, anecdotal reports from the field suggest family stress and consequent counseling services is up significantly. This is supported by the data gathered at the chaplain counseling training centers on Forts Hood and Benning where statistics are showing a 42-percent increase of families accessing services comparing similar reporting periods from 2005 and 2004. The Chaplain Corps has fielded a rapidly expanding series of reinforcing marriage retreats and training events called Building Strong and Ready Families (BSRF). From 2001 to 2005, utilization and funding of these retreats for Active-Duty couples has expanded dramatically from $500,000 in 2001 to $1.8 million in 2005. The Army Reserve and Army National Guard are funded at $5 million for this year. In 2005 the program will provide 621 marriage retreats to be attended by more than 23,375 volunteer deploying and reconstituting soldier families. Based on exit and follow-up surveys, Army couples are reporting considerable improvement in their overall relationship satisfaction, conflict resolution, confidence, and mitigating negative interactions. In total more than 75 percent of the couples questioned showed improvements in these areas compared to their pre-BSRF scores. Couples completing BSRF reported that it helped them relate to each other better, handle the stress of Army life, and want to stay in the Army longer.

35. Senator DOLE. General Schoomaker, what factors do the metrics account for?

General SCHOOMAKER. The metrics account for factors like constituent satisfaction, availability, as well as program utilization in categories such as family support, healthcare, standard of living, values, continuous learning, and welfare of our soldiers and families.

36. Senator DOLE. General Schoomaker, what are these metrics showing?

General SCHOOMAKER. There has been increased utilization of services and demand for information and counseling from both physical and Web-based services by soldiers and their families. Many family programs have added to the variety of services provided and lengthened their hours of operation to meet increased demands. When Reserve component soldiers are mobilized and deployed, often their families are not located near the deploying unit's home station or an Army installation where services are available. The Army is working to mitigate Reserve component issues through the development of additional Reserve component capabilities within the Army's "People" programs. These Reserve component centric capabilities include Web-based and toll-free services to assist these families in finding local assistance and answers to their concerns.

37. Senator DOLE. General Schoomaker, what trends are we seeing from the metrics?

General SCHOOMAKER. The trends are showing escalated utilization for programs already in existence and an increase in the variety of programs being offered Army-wide.

38. Senator DOLE. General Schoomaker, how are you translating these findings into tangible help for families?

General SCHOOMAKER. For both mandatory and voluntary services, most programs show considerable levels of success and satisfaction for those who participate in them. Examples include:

a. Army OneSource (AOS): A division of Military OneSource, this is a 24-hour, 7 days-a-week, toll-free information and referral telephone service available worldwide to Active-Duty, Reserve, and National Guard military members, deployed civilians, and their families. AOS provides information ranging from everyday concerns to deployment/reintegration issues. Face-to-face counseling referrals are available for six sessions per issue with professional civilian counselors at no cost to the soldier or

their families. To date, AOS has assisted almost 100,000 people requiring services and educational material with a 90-percent satisfaction rating.

b. Building Strong and Ready Families (BSRF): The Chaplain Corps has fielded a rapidly expanding series of reinforcing marriage retreats and training events called BSRF. From 2001 to 2005, use of these retreats has expanded dramatically, and beginning in 2005 they were offered to the Reserve component. For fiscal year 2005, the program will provide several hundred marriage retreats for more than 20,000 volunteer soldier families. Couples completing BSRF report that it helps them relate to each other better and stay longer in the Army.

c. Spouse/Family Employment Program: The Employment Readiness Program is focused on assisting eligible family members who are relocating as a result of a military or civilian sponsor's transfer by providing accurate, timely information and other supportive services necessary to minimize the employment problems associated with such moves. The U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center has established 17 collaborative partnerships with public and private sector companies to create career and training opportunities for military spouses.

d. Deployment Cycle Support (DCS): DCS assists the total Army family in meeting challenges during all phases of the deployment cycle. Deploying soldiers, civilians, and their family members participate in a series of classes, discussions, screenings, and assessments. Topics covered range from household budgeting and services available to reunion expectations and how to identify symptoms of deployment related stress. Redeploying soldiers and their families receive multi-faceted reintegration orientation and services beginning in-theater and continuing several months after arrival home.

e. Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR): In calendar year 2004, the Nation released just over 109,000 Reserve component soldiers from Federal Active Duty. Of these, less than 3 percent (approximately 3,100) required mediation services from the ESGR. Of that group, less than 2 percent reported being denied the right to return to work. ESGR resolves such problems through its ombudsman volunteers. Using education and mediation, these volunteers resolve 95 percent of all cases. Unresolved cases are referred to the Department of Labor for formal investigation.

f. Multi-Component Family Support Network (MCFSN): The MCFSN partners with States and communities and creates joint, multi-agency support for Active and Reserve components. It leverages current systems to provide robust, cohesive support systems with alternative delivery options to ensure diverse needs of Active, Guard, and Reserve soldier families are met. The five pilot regional programs developed and underway include the Southwest, Southeast, and Northwest.

g. Child and Youth Services (CYS): CYS offers quality programs and accountability for children and youth which reduce the conflict between mission readiness and parental responsibility. CYS responds to these requirements by providing programs with flexible hours and reducing child care fees for deployed soldiers.

h. Deployment Related Stress Treatment and Healthcare for Reserve Component Soldiers: The U.S. Army Medical Department has a comprehensive and integrated system for combat stress control, including prevention, intervention, and care. The combat stress control teams are deployed to areas of current operation to work closely with leaders and soldiers to help them cope with both the stresses of combat and the challenges of being on extended deployments. Educational activities include combat and operational stress control, suicide prevention classes, symptoms of combat and operational stress reactions, self-help techniques and exercises they can use to counter these reactions, and professional services available to help them. TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) is a premium-based TRICARE health plan available to eligible Reserve component soldiers who are ordered to Active-Duty in support of the global war on terrorism. All who were mobilized for 90 or more continuous days are eligible for TRS. TRS coverage is similar to TRICARE Standard or Extra.

TECHNOLOGIES FOR COUNTERING IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICES

39. Senator DOLE. General Myers, in General Hagee's submitted opening statement he mentioned an out-of-cycle small business initiative to find new technologies and quickly procure them to counter IEDs. In North Carolina we have several successful initiatives to marry small business capabilities and technologies with the needs of DOD in the areas of biotechnology and aircraft parts. Currently, it is left up to Congress to help small business through adds and earmarks on specific projects. What can be done systemically to expand the DOD's utilization of small businesses for meeting current and future procurement and technological requirements?

General MYERS. The DOD has a Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization Office that represents the Secretary of Defense on small business matters. This office develops DOD-wide small business policy and provides oversight to ensure compliance by all military departments and defense agencies. They are responsible for recommending systemic changes to the Secretary of Defense regarding DOD utilization of small businesses.

40. Senator DOLE. General Myers, wouldn't such expanded outreach not only help our small business but will also help our Nation maintain an important technological advantage?

General MYERS. The value of industry continually advancing technology to meet warfighter needs is vital to our success. The Department strives to identify promising technologies in our laboratories, research centers, academia, and domestic commercial sources, and these ideas are shared among DOD elements.

Evolutionary acquisition is the preferred DOD strategy for rapid acquisition of mature technologies. An evolutionary approach delivers capability in increments, recognizing the need for future capability improvement. The objective is to balance needs and available capability with resources, and to put capability into the hands of the user quickly. The success of the strategy depends on consistent and continuous definition of requirements and the maturation of technologies that lead to disciplined development and production of systems that provide increasing capability.

Representatives from multiple DOD communities assist in formulating broad, time-phased, operational goals and describing requisite capabilities. The Department then examines multiple concepts and materiel approaches to optimize ways to provide these capabilities. The examination includes robust analyses that consider affordability, availability of technology, and responsiveness.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED SENATOR DANIEL K. AKAKA

IDENTITY THEFT

41. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Chu, you recently stated that the military has purchased data from commercial vendors for quite some time. You also stated that you did not know why a firm specializing in target marketing was hired to compile a database of personal information on potential military recruits and that the information managed by the new contractor would be used only by local recruiters. Given the numerous recent accounts of identity theft incidences with large numbers of records being lost, what checks do you have in place to ensure that this personal data about potential recruits is protected and the individuals' privacy will be protected?

Dr. CHU. Recruiting activities are conducted solely by the Services, not by any private company. BeNOW is the company that warehouses the data that the DOD collects. The subcontract was awarded based solely on BeNOW's ability to maintain and securely store large amounts of data and does not include marketing efforts of any kind. The Department is dedicated to protecting the privacy and protection of all personal data and recognizes the importance of ensuring that the data it collects are safely compiled, handled, stored, and securely transferred to the Services. All data are transferred via a Secure File Transfer Protocol. These data are stored in a highly secure and restrictive environment. Vulnerability and risk assessment reviews are conducted on a regular basis to ensure maximum safeguarding of information. Access cards are required to enter the facility and video monitoring is conducted on a continuous basis. All data are password protected and access to these data is on a need to know basis.

42. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Chu, do you not believe that collecting students' Social Security numbers and other sensitive date is an infringement on one's privacy?

Dr. CHU. No, the Department only uses the Social Security number (SSN) and other demographic data in order to carry out its functions. Contacting young Americans and making them aware of their options to serve in the military is critical to the success of the All-Volunteer Force and is an activity conducted under a 23-year old congressional mandate. SSNs have been provided to the Department through two input sources—Selective Service System Registrants, and the Military Entrance Processing Command accession files. The Department does not keep actual SSNs in the database. The SSNs are scrambled and stored in a secure manner and the original numbers are securely expunged. SSNs provide the most accurate method to match and remove duplicate records in the database. Additionally, SSNs are the

most accurate way to match Selective Service responders to the accession files. This matching allows DOD to better understand who has joined the military.

MILITARY PAY

43. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Chu, in March of this year, Secretary Rumsfeld chartered the Defense Advisory Committee on Military Compensation (DACMC) to identify approaches to balance military pay and benefits in sustaining recruitment and retention of high-qualified people, as well as a cost-effective and ready military force. The operating cost of the DACMC was founded for $3.5 million. The DACMC is scheduled to conduct numerous public hearings this summer and is expected to file an interim report in September of this year. Have you received any interim reports from the DACMC that would give an indication of how significant the impact of disparity in pay between Active-Duty servicemembers and reservists and National Guard when it comes to recruiting and retaining a ready military force?

Dr. CHU. In May 2005, the DACMC began conducting monthly public meetings as it deliberates on military compensation issues. As indicated, it is slated to provide an interim report to the Office of the Secretary of Defense by October 2005, with the final report due in April 2006. As part of its review, the DACMC is examining the area of Reserve and Guard compensation. Since the DACMC is still in the process of gathering and analyzing data, it is anticipated that any findings or recommendations will first be available as part of the interim report.

EFFECTIVENESS OF FIGHTING WARS IN MULTIPLE THEATERS

44. Senator AKAKA. General Myers, as the 2005 QDR looks to shift the focus of the previous QDR from being prepared to fighting two major conventional wars in separate theaters, it is considering having the force-planning construct revolve around homeland defense, the global war on terrorism, and conventional major warfare. What measures has the administration already instituted to ensure that the homeland security and global war on terrorism are being carried out most effectively and what reviews are in place to measure success?

General MYERS. a. Homeland Security: On 4 July 2004, the Joint Staff Director of Operations directed an evaluation of standing homeland security execution orders (EXORDs) for currency and relevance. As a result, EXORDs in the air, land, and maritime domains have been rewritten, as well as the EXORD for consequence management. The updated consequence management EXORD gives U.S. Northern Command and U.S. Pacific Command the capability to respond to multiple chemical, biological, radiological/nuclear, and explosive consequence management (CBRNE CM) events in support of a lead Federal agency within their areas of operation.

The Joint Staff is supporting an OSD-led interagency analysis effort to develop DOD concept of operations, task lists, and force requirements for several of the Homeland Security Council's planning scenarios. This coordinated analysis effort will serve to inform the Department in the development of CBRNE CM capabilities.

b. War on Terrorism: The Department of Defense has developed a process for assessing progress with respect to war on terrorism based on the six military strategic objectives (MSOs) outlined in the National Military Strategic Plan for the war on terrorism. Progress toward achieving the first two MSOs ("Deny terrorists the resources they need to operate and survive" and "Enable partner nations to counter terrorism") was studied during an accelerated assessment conducted during the spring of 2005. A complete assessment of progress measured against all six MSOs will commence in the fall of 2005.

[Whereupon, at 12:31 p.m., the committee adjourned.]

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