

Notes from Meeting of the National Marine Corps Council

October 25, 2014

Fairview Park Marriott

- Meeting called to order by Chairman Dave Bice
- Opening by the Chairman, NMCC w/Pledge of Allegiance
- Purpose of meetings—representatives of organizations to act as ‘conduits’ to their members, by relaying information presented at the meetings to them
- Introductions of members present

- Presentation by MajGen Fred Padilla, P,P&O, HQMC—current operations brief (Note-Gen. Padilla will soon become the President of National Defense University)
- Mention of letter from General Dunford, new CMC (handed out to reps.)
- Quality of Marines entering the Corps is extremely high/attrition rate at boot camp has decreased significantly—also at the Infantry School
- The Corps is accepting risks (from a budget perspective)—sustainment dollars are being spent **now**
- The Goal—one third of the Marine Corps to be deployed in the future
- “Dynamic Presence”—in other words, save \$\$ by being less deployed
- Commitments to the Pacific (re-balancing the force)—part of the overall strategic shift in focus to that region
- The Corps knows that it must continue to “promise and deliver” (can’t overextend)
- Special Purpose-Marine Air-Ground Task Force (SP-MAGTF) described, along with growth of the Marine Security Guard (MSG) program, and the creation of the Marine Security Augmentation Unit (MSAU)—based at Quantico
- The overall Ground Combat Element (GCE) has significantly shrunk
- 175 K Marines—Sequestration Level
- 182 K Marines—currently planned
- 186.8 K—the “right size”
- Marine forces spread around the world--Ebola project in West Africa (Operation “United Assistance”) and “Inherent Resolve” (the fight against ISIS/ISIL)
- SP-MAGTF-CRs (Crisis Response) units for AFRICOM and CENTCOM
- AFRICOM units based at Moron, Spain and Sigonella, Italy
- In the past year, these units have deployed to Juba (Sudan), Tripoli (Libya), Sana’a (Yemen), etc.
- P,P,&O brief included mention of evacuation of the embassy in Tripoli, Libya in July—support from the SP-MAGTF-CR (V-22s, C-130s, AV-8Bs, etc.)

- Marines are often under the operational control (OPCON) of several Combatant Commands (i.e., AFRICOM, EUCOM, CENTCOM, etc.)
 - The flexibility offered by new classes of ships assists us with enabling the **Sea Basing Concept**
 - As far as amphibious ships are concerned, we are “hurting” and we often find that we have the wrong ‘mix’ of ship classes when structuring a PHIBRON or Amphibious Ready Group (ARG)
 - The Marine Rotational Force at Darwin, Australia—will grow to become a force of about 2,500 Marines
 - MajGen Padilla defined the SP-MAGTF as “the force that keeps on giving” (providing)
 - Re-focusing in the Pacific—mentioned the Army’s “Pacific Pathways” initiative
 - The Marine Corps is looking at a dispersal of forces on Okinawa, Guam, Hawaii, Australia and perhaps even the Philippines
 - “The U.S. is facing significant security challenges” (cyber, terrorism, etc.) and “the audio does not seem to match the video”—MajGen Padilla
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- Briefing by Colonel “Otter” Bew, the Deputy Legislative Assistant to the CMC (OLA)
 - “There is no authorization act as of today” (late)
 - Major Issue for the Marine Corps:
 - The role of the commander in the military justice system
 - *See other issues listed in Col. Bew’s handout materials
 - **38 amphibious ships is the requirement—we are restrained to 33**
 - FY-15—“not a normal year”—largely because we are seeing an end to \$\$ available courtesy of the Overseas Contingency Operations funds (OCO)—we’ll have to have much more reliance on the base line
 - Relationship between OLA and the Division of Public Affairs?—*explained more thoroughly later in the brief by Colonel Dave Lapan, Director of USMC Communication
 - The problem of “leaked” information is made more significant due to the rise of social media (Blogs, Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
 - **OLA priorities:**
 - #1—Baseline Force Structure (# of Marines—182K or 186.8K)**
 - #2—LPD 28**
 - #3—Uniforms**
 - #4—MC Force Integration Plan (women in infantry units)—SecDef goal of January 2016/USMC goal of October 2015**
 - #5—Sexual Assault**
 - #6—Compensation Reform**
 - Colonel Hall’s Programs and Resources (P&R) briefing

- “Congress is very supportive of the Marine Corps and its requirements”
 - OCO (Offshore Contingency Operations funding) will go away after the next FDYP
 - The Corps is in much better shape due to the work of the Force Structure Review Group (FSRG)
 - In the words of former CMC Gen. Amos, the “Corps will be experiencing a re-awakening” (i.e., getting back to pre-Iraq/Afghanistan)—more **frugality and austerity**
 - Majors and Staff Sergeants who have been brought up during the ‘war years’ have not had to operate under such frugal measures—they’ve gotten pretty much everything they’ve asked for during the past 12 years—thanks largely to OCO dollars
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- Colonel Marvin Reed—CofS, Marine and Family Programs (MF)
 - The Corps will see a \$33M cut in MF programs in FY 15
 - “But we will maintain ‘core’ capabilities”
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 - Colonel Shane Tomko, CO, Wounded Warrior Regiment
 - The WWR works under both Title 10 and Title 38 funding
 - It ‘touches’ more than 30K Marines
 - The two WW Battalions (East-Camp Lejeune and West-Camp Pendleton) have 500 bed spaces
 - The Marine Corps “keeps the faith” like no other military service in the U.S.
 - Col Tomko cautioned the members of the NNMC to “watch out for faulty Wounded Warrior -related organizations”—scrutinize the amount of money going directly to programs—not to overhead!
 - The ‘stigma’ of being a recovering Wounded Warrior as far as promotions or command selections are concerned has diminished
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- Colonel Dave Lapan, Director, Office of Marine Corps Communication
 - Public affairs Marines and Combat Camera specialists are now “under the same roof” (but only at HQMC)
 - He mentioned two videos produced at Headquarters—one dealing with Ebola; the other about MOH recipient Corporal Carpenter
 - A re-organization of the public affairs field (OF 4300) has occurred throughout the Corps
 - The demand for information has increased rapidly (Blogs, main stream media, trade publications, etc.)
 - There are about 100 PA officers in the Corps; approximately 300 enlisted PA Marines
 - He mentioned that Gen. Dunford would probably favor an increase in the # of PA Marines and capabilities
 - NMCC members were reminded of the “Playbook” that is sent out routinely—if not getting it, contact Jeanette at the Marine Corps League

- The effects of Sequestration on Marine Corps Community Relations-oriented events—Bands, Color Guards, Blue Angels, funeral support, etc.)
- The Department of Defense in “micro-managing” these requests much more than in the past
- No Marine Week planned for 2015; although there may be a round of ‘re-visits’ to those sites previously utilized (Boston, Chicago, St. Louis and Seattle)—follow up visits
- Relationship between OLA and USMC Communication—excellent
- Sequence used when releasing information—Families; the Hill; then the Media
- As Col. Lapan said, it all comes down to “What kind of Marine Corps does the American public want to pay for?”

Old Business

- Locations for the two annual meetings to remain the same—Spring at the Pentagon; Fall at the Fairview Park Marriott (or other suitable site)

New Business

- Request from the Marine Corps Reserve Association for NMCC membership (Col Ken Hopper)...members present approved the request
- The MCL staff needs updated member organization contact information
- Board/Officers on the NMCC not to change until the spring meeting

Meeting adjourned by Chairman Dave Bice at 1:40 p.m.

