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A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDING GENERAL
MARINE CORPS SYSTEMS COMMAND

Force modernization is the cornerstone for advancing Marine Corps competitive advantage in a growing global threat and great power competition environment. Marine Corps Systems Command and our supported program executive offices comprise the Defense Acquisition System professionals responsible for delivering the required lethal, resilient, and highly capable ground weapons and equipment. The *Commandant's Planning Guidance* and *Force Design 2030* constitute our compelling mission orders.

In fact, the revolutionary scope, scale, and urgency to modernize capabilities bring a jarring impact to our acquisition mission. We are on the move with clarity of purpose and a high-energy bias for action. Our FMF's operational necessity, together with our commitment to the individual Marine, drives all we do. The future warfighting capability and capacity of our Corps is at stake.

This Marine and civilian team of Marine Corps acquisition professionals is adapting at speed as a design-driven, critical producer of advantage for Naval expeditionary warfare. For example, in early April, we leveraged all available internal assets to stand-up a new Program Manager for Long-Range Fires for immediate prototyping to rapidly field/deliver capability to our FMF by 2023.

We are teamed primarily with the Marine Corps lead for Force Design and Development, DC, CD&I, and DC, P&R who leads the allocation of resources for these Service-level investments. The Force Design Initial Operational Capability timeline of 2023 paces our day-to-day tasks/urgency. To impose cost, time penalty, and risk on our adversaries, we seek to translate even modest investment in high-capacity lethal systems into effective capabilities. This work requires funding and special skills, but it also demands humility—to set aside what we think we know and embrace the new flexibilities afforded to Defense acquisition by Congress. Crucially, we must leverage opportune technology from mature and proven systems/capabilities developed by others. Wherever appropriate, we will collaborate with all our sister Services when we execute Marine Corps *Force Design 2030* modernization/acquisition.

Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition, the Honorable James F. Geurts, in testimony on 11 March before the Senate Armed Services Committee described a leading example of our readiness to adapt: “Our highest ground modernization priority is our ground-based anti-ship missile ... couples this [Joint Light Tactical Vehicle] JLTV in an unmanned form with the Navy strike missile ... leveraging things that are already developed so we don't have to spend money redeveloping things that already exist.” As we further integrate our naval strategy, we must also integrate more of our acquisition strategies to ensure we leverage the full potential of the Naval acquisition enterprise.

New acquisition law and associated OSD/DON regulations also enable us to tailor development and procurement strategies. For example, Other Transactions Authority can increase available vendors, and Modular Open Systems Architecture provides a methodology to deliver capability apace with rapidly advancing technologies.

Our Command's focus of main effort is the program managers: Commanders-Marine Colonels and Lieutenant Colonels, and civilian professionals leading expert teams of Marines, civilians, and contractors. As with any Marine formation, the maneuver mindset prevails. Decentralized/delegated execution enables program success. Responsible for an aggregate of multi-billion-dollar weapons systems, equipment, and platforms, these Marine Corps acquisition “maneuver units” thrive on mission orders. Special trust and confidence in our Marine “program leaders” enables closing faster on intended effects that will generate consequences for our adversaries.

This is a crucial time for our Corps. We fully own our calling to equip the individual Marine and FMF. In this issue, articles on a variety of acquisition topics sample the depth of our Marine Corps acquisition professionals. I think you will find them engaging and look forward to this forum's continued exchange of ideas.

A.J. Pasagian
Brigadier General, U.S. Marine Corps
Commanding General, Marine Corps Systems Command