

ON POINT

MARINES

EQUIPPING THE WAR

Crafting a Strategic Plan to Support Our Warfighters

MARINE CORPS SYSTEMS COMMAND MAGAZINE
STRATEGIC PLAN SPECIAL EDITION 2009

- ▶ Town Hall's guest speaker: Darrell Green
- ▶ Strategic Plan crafted with teamwork
- ▶ MCSC's road map for the future

A message from the
COMMANDER



To the Marines, Sailors and Civilian Marines of Marine Corps Systems Command and Program Executive Officer for Land Systems,

I am pleased to present our Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC) 2010-2014 Strategic Plan. We will formally unveil the Plan at a Town Hall meeting Oct. 15 in front of Bldg. 2200. This is an unusual venue, but we're doing it here to showcase our Command roadmap for the next five years.

We are honored to have National Football League Hall of Fame member and former Washington Redskin cornerback Darrell Green with us to highlight our Strategic Plan. He set NFL records, played hurt and helped his team win two Super Bowls during his 20-year career. He can attest to the importance of a strategic plan, and his appearance will get our implementation effort off to a rousing start.

This unique presentation is an excellent way to emphasize the importance Command leaders place on the Plan. Closely linked to the Commandant's Marine Corps Vision and Strategy 2025, it is our roadmap to the future. Many people worked long hours beyond their regular duties to craft our Strategic Plan's goals and objectives into executable tasks. Many more employees throughout the Command are now working to put our Plan in motion.

We are at a critical moment in Marine Corps history. We must anticipate and meet rapid changes in acquisition. Many of our long-tenured employees are getting ready to retire. We must expand our workforce to meet our increasingly demanding mission, and at the same time, we have the challenge of in-sourcing thousands of hours of work that has been provided by contractors. We need to attract new people to MCSC. We need to be the employer of choice in northern Virginia.

Above all, we are at war. Our forward-deployed Marines depend on us for their support and survival. Our Strategic Plan charts the path so we continue to provide for those in harm's way. Our success hinges on people in every corner of our Command knowing their role in the Strategic Plan and putting their full effort into accomplishing the mission.

I look forward to seeing all of you Oct. 15 in front of Command Headquarters as we raise the curtain and roll out our vision for the next five years.

Semper Fidelis!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M.M. Brogan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

M.M. Brogan
Brigadier General
U.S. Marine Corps

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SPECIAL EDITION

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“It’s important for the Command to have a strategic plan so that we’re all moving in one direction.”

— Natalie Boddy
Life Cycle Logistics

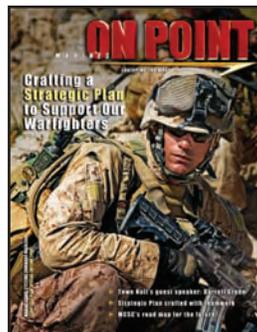


“A strategic plan provides an organization with a vision for the future, to meet future needs and to build a better organization. Without a strategic plan, organizations will drift as their strategic environment changes, just as a tree bends in the breeze. Developing courses of action to meet the Command’s vision keeps the organization focused.”

— John Young
Facilities, Services and Supply



On the Cover: A Marine Corps Sergeant provides security during a reconnaissance patrol in the Nawa district of the Helmand province of Afghanistan in August. Marine Corps Systems Command’s new Strategic Plan will help the Command to better support Marines like this Sergeant in harm’s way. (Photo by Lance Corporal Phillip Elgie)



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Teamwork

MCSC teams create, execute Command game plan

Teamwork has been one of the primary themes of past Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC) strategic plans, and that emphasis continues with the Command's new 2010-2014 Strategic Plan.

"There is a lot of emphasis on a team-based organization here," said Jim Westerholm, Product Group Director for Communications, Intelligence and Networking Systems. "Teamwork really got us through the last five to seven years with the war and the incredible workload. The fact that we're a team-based organization allowed us to succeed in that environment."

Teamwork is also the primary ingredient in the successful creation of MCSC's new Strategic Plan. Westerholm led the Strategic Planning Team (SPT), a group of 16 individuals representing a cross section of the Command. In about a seven-month period this team laid the groundwork for the new Strategic Plan.

"I had the opportunity to work with a group of highly talented professional people," Westerholm said. "The team really put some time and effort into this, and it comes out in the quality of the product that we put out there. They were the real driving force behind this."

The SPT presented their product to the Command's Executive Steering Team (EST) in January. The EST is a chartered "decision-making body" within MCSC, according to Clyde Bentley, the Command's Strategic Change Management Center (SCMC) Director.

This formal team is made up of 10 top Command leaders, including the Executive Director, Program Executive Officer for Land Systems, Chief of Staff, Chief Management Officer (CMO), a few Product Group Directors, and Deputy and Assistant Commanders from Systems Engineering Interoperability, Architectures and Technology; Resource Management; Life Cycle Logistics; and Programs.

"One of their main responsibilities is strategic initiatives and strategic actions to move the Command forward," Bentley said.

"The Strategic Plan was reviewed, massaged and accepted by the EST," said Bob Williams, MCSC's new CMO. "We deliberated numerous times and finally ended up with the current view, and then we presented it to the Commander."

Moving through two teams and then Brigadier General Michael Brogan, MCSC Commander, the final product, with four goals and 12 objectives, is now ready to be revealed Oct. 15 at an all-hands Town Hall. But before that even happens, the Command has formed Goal Champions and Objective Teams to create and execute initiatives to help MCSC reach the Strategic Plan's goals and objectives.

These teams started meeting in August, and in Williams' words, they are going through "forming, norming, storming and performing-type stages. That's all part of teamwork.... In our acquisition competency, we do believe in team communications, open discussions and continuous learning."

The Strategic Plan falls under the purview of the CMO, and the CMO office will act as the liaison between these Objective Teams. The teams are now getting down to business and starting their very important work.

"When you look at the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan, there's specificity that really makes it a challenge," said Tim Ferris, the CMO's Business Manager. "It's not just a kind of generic 'OK, let's get together and just spend some time.' There are actions that need to happen here that are very challenging. I think challenge is kind of the watch word for the Strategic Plan – challenge and opportunity. It's going to take some work."

Helping these teams complete the work is the Command's SCMC, which is providing the training and direction. In fact, the SCMC has been involved in the entire Strategic Plan process, starting its research in 2007 and looking at MCSC mission and vision statements, and lessons learned, from as far back as 1992. The Center supported the EST and SPT, and it is now guiding the Objective Teams.

"Our job now is to support the Objective Teams,

“The Strategic Plan fully allows me to support the Commandant’s intent toward executing MCSC’s mission in accordance with his guiding principles and goals.”

— Verne Ashby
Infantry Weapon Systems



get them off the ground, get them trained up so they can do their jobs,” Bentley said. “We will make sure there’s synergy, communication, and we’ll keep track of what they’re doing and how things are going.... Down the road not too far, the Objective Teams are

going to have to report how they’re doing, what their status is and how they’re moving out to reach their assigned objectives. So, we’re going to help them get there.”

“This will be one of the most rewarding jobs they will do,” said Dr. John Burrow, MCSC’s Executive Director. “Their work will have long-lasting effects on the structure, culture and performance of the organization well into the future.”

The Objective Teams will report to the Strategic Plan’s Goal Champions, positions assigned to the Command’s Senior Executive Service members and the new CMO billet. The Objective Team Leaders are also all very senior MCSC leaders.

“Senior leadership has gotten behind this Plan because we all believe in it. We really want to drive this,” Westerholm said. “This has raised the level of participation, and the grades associated with it show that it’s important to all of us to get this done. With this leadership and teamwork, we will be able to drive successes and keep pushing this process to reach our goals in three to five years.”

— By Bill Johnson-Miles, MCSC Corporate Communications

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Setting the stage for future change

Looking back from the future, today's movers and shakers of the Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC) 2010-2014 Strategic Plan will say they helped improve Marine Corps acquisition.

MCSC Executive Director Dr. John Burrow believes that will be the hallmark of what portends to be long hours and hard work as men and women throughout the Command labor to shape MCSC's roadmap to acquisition excellence.

The Executive Director said that putting the Strategic Plan in place sets the stage for MCSC and Program Executive Officer for Land Systems (PEO LS) to continue meeting their mission and commitment to be effective, efficient and responsive acquisition organizations.

"We need to continue to grow and adapt as an organization to accommodate future acquisition and operational needs, and to ensure we have a capable and responsive professional workforce," Burrow said. "The Strategic Plan pro-

vides a roadmap to get us where we need to be five to 10 years from now."

The average person working at MCSC and PEO LS might not notice an immediate change to day-to-day life in the Command, and Dr. Burrow said that would be OK.

"Strategic plans, for the most part, provide a long-term view and, therefore, might not offer noticeable impacts in the near term," he said. "However – with our recent emphasis on teaming, process improvements, hiring and competency alignment – hopefully, people will see immediate and positive changes in how we do business and operate as a Command."

Implementing the Strategic Plan, Burrow said, will require everyone throughout MCSC to pull together to craft each of its different aspects. Various teams are already working long hours to flesh out the Plan's four goals and 12 objectives.

"This will be one of the most rewarding jobs they will do at Systems Command because it is an enduring effort," the Executive Director said. "Their work will have long-lasting effects on the structure, culture and performance of the organization well into the future. Five to 10 years from now participants in developing and implementing the Strategic Plan will be able to see the changes and reflect on the significant contributions they've made to the Command and the Marine Corps acquisition community.

"The results of the Strategic Plan will make an outstanding Systems Command even better," Dr. Burrow said, "and will position our organization, people and processes to continue to provide exceptional support to the Marine Corps."

— By Jim Katzaman, MCSC Corporate Communications

"The results of the Strategic Plan will make an outstanding Marine Corps Systems Command even better. It will position our organization, people and processes to continue to provide exceptional support to the Marine Corps."

— Dr. John Burrow
Executive Director

CLOSE ALIGNMENT

Plan helps keep MCSC and PEO LS on same page

Program Executive Officer for Land Systems (PEO LS) continues to notch notable achievements while observing its second anniversary since the Assistant Secretary of Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition declared it fully operational capable Oct. 1, 2007. As with any other organization within or partnered with Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC), PEO LS supports the Command's Strategic Plan roadmap.

"PEO Land Systems is refining its operating processes across all domains, such as the requirements community, research and development, technology and logistics," said William Taylor, the PEO for Land Systems.

"We're looking at identifying accurate costs within programs and ascertaining ways of effectively managing the life-cycle sustainment of those programs. But we have to get the costs right from the beginning, which is why we are establishing a robust cost estimating capability to do just that.

"Of course," he added, "we couldn't aspire to tackle that vast list without a vision and plan and that brings us to the MCSC Strategic Plan, which we fully embrace. In fact, I have two members of my work force who are Objective Team Leaders. We have a stake in the Plan's success, just like any other program manager, project officer and teammate in the Command."

Incorporating the MCSC Strategic Plan into PEO LS daily operations, according to Mr. Taylor, takes on added importance because his organization's structure welcomes the guidance of a strategic plan to make sure everyone is moving in the same direction.

"The PEO infrastructure is unique in that it relies on a matrixed support basis and competency-aligned character," Taylor said. "The matrixed support arrangement in its most basic form can be explained by using the development of a technical manual as an

example. If a tech manual requires one man-year to produce, I may never see the individuals who actually produce the content for the manual. They simply deliver a product.

"Under competency alignment, my staff is aligned to MCSC very much like a homeroom school concept," he said. "With this arrangement, competency-aligned members are not afraid to 'tell the emperor he has no clothes'. It provides the necessary checks and balances to keep things level. Their product is advice and counsel and is indispensable.

"Without this arrangement with MCSC," Taylor added, "the PEO could not be as effective as it is. Through competency alignment we're able to fully integrate PEO LS into MCSC."

He noted how that fits in with one of the objectives of Goal III of the Strategic Plan: "Complete our transition to a competency-aligned, team-based work environment."

"The Strategic Plan keeps everyone on track," Mr. Taylor said. "It reminds us every day who we serve. At PEO LS – just as throughout MCSC – we come to work every day with the attitude that it's all about the warfighter."

— By Jim Katzaman, MCSC
Corporate Communications

"The Strategic Plan keeps everyone on track. It reminds us every day who we serve."

— William Taylor
Program Executive Officer for Land Systems



MCSCC ROAD MAP

Strategic Plan plots path to success

A mission has to have a vision. A trip to the corner store is impossible without an internal map. A grocery list is a reminder of must-haves.

Creating a strategic plan is vastly more complex than a trip to the store, but those involved with creating and implementing the Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSCC) document might agree on the similarities.

“The 2010-2014 Strategic Plan provides a map for the individual, for the Command, for the leadership all to have a common picture of where we are and where we’re going,” said Tim Ferris, the Command’s Chief Management Officer’s (CMO) Business

Manager. “The Strategic Plan also represents a structure intensively oriented toward process improvement.”

The Command’s decision to implement a new Strategic Plan coincides with other service-wide imperatives. It includes supporting the *Marine Corps Vision and Strategy 2025* and growing the already aging federal workforce by infusing the inherently governmental, technical competencies through a multi-year in-sourcing initiative.

James Westerholm, Product Group Director of Communications, Intelligence and Networking Systems, led the Strategic Planning Team. He said



“The Cost and Analysis Branch in Programs will be challenged to meet the requirements from the Secretary of Defense and Secretary of the Navy to almost triple our analysis capabilities over the next five years. The timing of these efforts is perfect. Our branch can weave our planning into the fabric of the Command’s Strategic Plan. We won’t have to figure this all out in a vacuum.”

— Major Scott Willette
Programs

“The Strategic Plan helps us cope with the changes and challenges of the future. It helps us to make the right moves at the right time in detail.”

*— Lance Corporal Chris McIntyre
Staff Secretary Administration Office*



putting in place a viable, meaningful Strategic Plan that everyone can relate to is essential.

“When we analyzed how we wanted to lay out the strategic path,” he said, “it was clear that everyone in the Command should be linked to the Strategic Plan. In fact, one of our objectives is to have the Strategic Plan linked down to every computer desktop. So, instead of asking how the Plan affects me, one can look at the Plan and say, ‘Yep, this is where the Command’s going on the strategic path, and this is how I contribute toward reaching that goal.’”

Individual participation, Westerholm noted, would be a “tough sell” if not for the wholehearted involvement of MCSC leaders from the top down. The Command’s Strategic Change Management Center’s (SCMC) staff knew that was essential for this Strategic Plan from inception.

“Most strategic plans are successful if you have the leadership engaged,” said Lynda Fullem, SCMC Change Coordinator. “We see a real commitment here from our leaders, and I think the workforce is going to see that, too.”

She added that the Oct. 15 Strategic Plan Town Hall shows the commitment to communicating. This is especially evident in having former Washington Redskin cornerback Darrell Green on hand to launch the Plan’s presentation. A member of the NFL Hall of Fame, he founded the Darrell Green Youth Life Foundation, a faith-based charitable organization, in an effort to “meet the needs of children, their families and the communities in which they live.” For the Town Hall, Green will talk about how a strategic plan, or a game plan, is essential in all walks of life.

The plan also has to be dynamic, able to adjust for any unexpected changes to the operations tempo, according to Sandra Switzer, Deputy CMO.

“Whether our tempo ebbs or flows,” she said, “we’ve got to have the right type of processes and systems in place to take care of our people. That’s

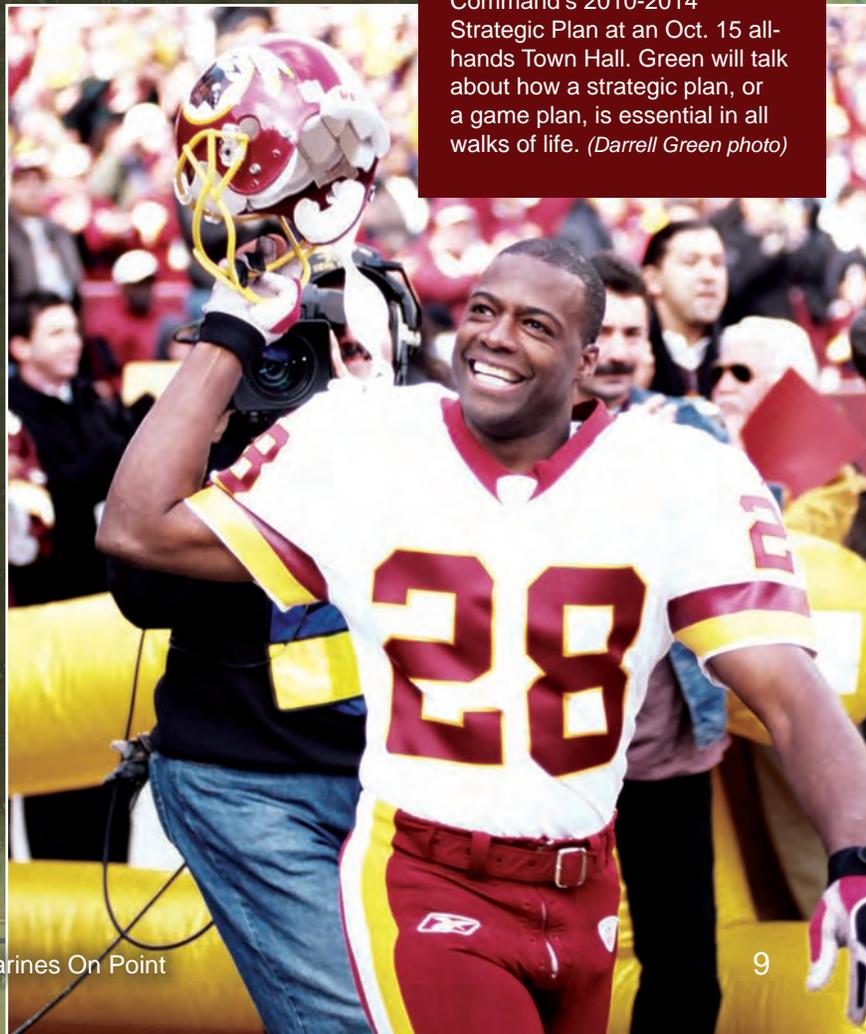
a lot of our emphasis with the Strategic Plan. We’re not starting from scratch. We have a lot of good stuff that we can build upon. We need to take care of our people and give them the right type of tools. Then we can fluctuate with the op-tempo.”

Leaders’ involvement and participation by the entire Command workforce, she added, will give everyone ownership in the Plan.

“Our people need to know that we own it,” she said. “This is our plan.

Everyone has to say this belongs to us. We support this Plan, and we want everyone to join in the process so we can make this a

Former Washington Redskins cornerback Darrell Green, a member of the NFL Hall of Fame, is slated to help launch Marine Corps Systems Command’s 2010-2014 Strategic Plan at an Oct. 15 all-hands Town Hall. Green will talk about how a strategic plan, or a game plan, is essential in all walks of life. (Darrell Green photo)



“The Command’s Strategic Plan sets the tone for all Command activities and guides the principles behind the effective and efficient development, fielding and lifecycle management of expeditionary warfare systems that support the warfighter across the globe.”



— David Lobik
Systems Engineering Interoperability,
Architecture and Technology

true vision for us.”

Total involvement will also give the Strategic Plan a life of its own, according to Clyde Bentley, SCMC Director.

“We firmly believe, and the organization believes, that teams do better at solutions than individuals,” Bentley said. “All the teams are doing this work because we believe it’s better. Also, by having cross-functional teams involved from throughout the organization, we get a lot more people as advocates than if we just had an individual. If we have seven members on 12 teams – that’s 84 people out of the Command – we have many advocates. They will feel positive about what they’re doing and they will go out, talk it up and convince others that this is worthwhile.”

If anything, he added, strategic plans reflect corporate best practices.

“In the commercial world,” Bentley said, “when companies do strategic planning, whether it’s the business unit or on the corporate level, they go through a deliberate process. They realize that a corporation or a business without a long-range plan usually does not do as well as those who really plan ahead and have a long-range as well as a short-range view.”

One of the greatest lessons of strategic planning, he added, arose from ruins of the 2001 terrorist attacks.

“Right after the Command completed its strategic plan at that time, and it started to launch implementation teams, 9/11 happened,” Bentley said. “Our world changed a lot. I believe, and I think many others believe, that the whole strategic planning process

positioned the Command much better to support the war effort in Iraq and Afghanistan.

“We don’t know what the future is going to be,” he said. “We have some ideas. We have some assumptions. We’re going to try to position ourselves to be successful and to continue to support our Marines in the future. And try to look ahead. That’s always a good thing.”

The CMO’s Business Manager concurred. “The Strategic Plan certainly looks outward at our customer focus in supporting the warfighter,” Ferris said. “But one of the beauties of this for the workforce is that the Strategic Plan looks inward at the things we need to do as a workforce, that we need to do as an organization, to improve ourselves, to build up and enhance our abilities to support our customer, the forward-deployed Marine.”

That mission, he added, is not only that of MCSC and Program Executive Officer for Land Systems but also the overriding charge as laid out in *Marine Corps Vision and Strategy 2025*.

— By Jim Katzaman, MCSC Corporate Communications

New CMO shares his thoughts on MCSC Strategic Plan

At Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC) change is continuous, and change happens no matter what any of us do. That's according to the Command's new Chief Management Officer (CMO) Bob Williams, and for examples he points to insourcing and work processes.

But we can handle those changes and direct those changes, the CMO said, with the tools of MCSC's new Strategic Plan.

"With the new Strategic Plan, our workforce is determining the future," Williams said. "By using the goals and objectives of the Plan we all can help our Command become a place of choice for professionals."

The Strategic Plan falls under the purview of the CMO. "The Strategic Plan defines how we conduct our business, how we focus it, how we treat our workforce, how we use ourselves in the execution of our mission," Williams said. "Our culture is what's being set forth here."

MCSC's 2010-2014 Strategic Plan, which will be revealed Oct. 15 at an all-hands Town Hall, establishes four primary goals for the Command, with three objectives per goal, for a total of 12 objectives.

"The purpose of these objectives is to move the Command to a desired position in the future so we can accomplish our mission," the CMO said. "It will incorporate our philosophy of leadership, our culture and embrace our principles and our values. It will make MCSC capable of acquiring and sustaining equipment, weapons systems and state-of-the-art information technology solutions to support our warfighters."

Objective teams have been formed within the Command to create and execute initiatives to help MCSC reach the Plan's goals and objectives. The CMO office

will act as the liaison between these objective teams.

"One of the things we will work on in the CMO office is what I call the interface between these objectives," Williams said. "Because if you change something in one objective, it might change something in another objective, or change a view, or cause us to do something different. So, it's going to be our job to see this and make sure that information is being shared."

According to Williams, the sharing of ideas to reach a common goal is an important aspect of the Plan, not just with the Command's leadership or the objective teams, but with the entire workforce.

"We will engage the workforce for feedback on the objectives and the initiatives that flow out of the Strategic Plan," the CMO said. "We want honest input back. We want to hear how you think we're doing. If we don't get that kind of exchange going, then we're missing an opportunity. This Strategic Plan is not only to support our warfighter externally, it's also to support us. It's our chance to make MCSC a better organization for all of us, for our team."

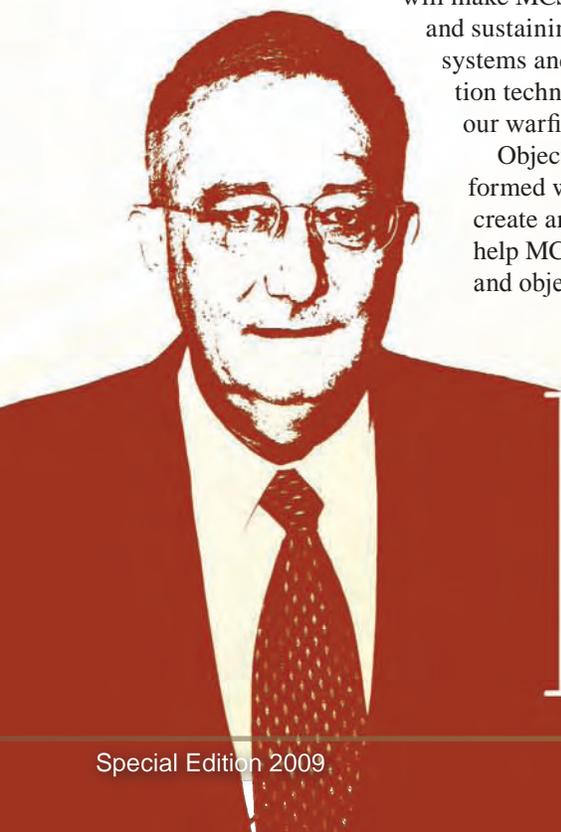
However, the bottom line is the Marine in harm's way, and according to the CMO, whatever we can do to become a better organization helps that Marine.

"This Strategic Plan really supports the Commandant of the Marine Corps' vision of how we're going to support the Corps, our piece of equipping the warfighters so they can be successful, so they can win and come home safely," Williams said.

— By Bill Johnson-Miles, MCSC Corporate Communications

"The Strategic Plan defines how we conduct our business, how we focus it, how we treat our workforce, how we use ourselves in the execution of our mission. Our culture is what's being set forth here."

— Bob Williams
Chief Management Officer



Determining the FUTURE

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Concession Stand opens @ 11:30 a.m.

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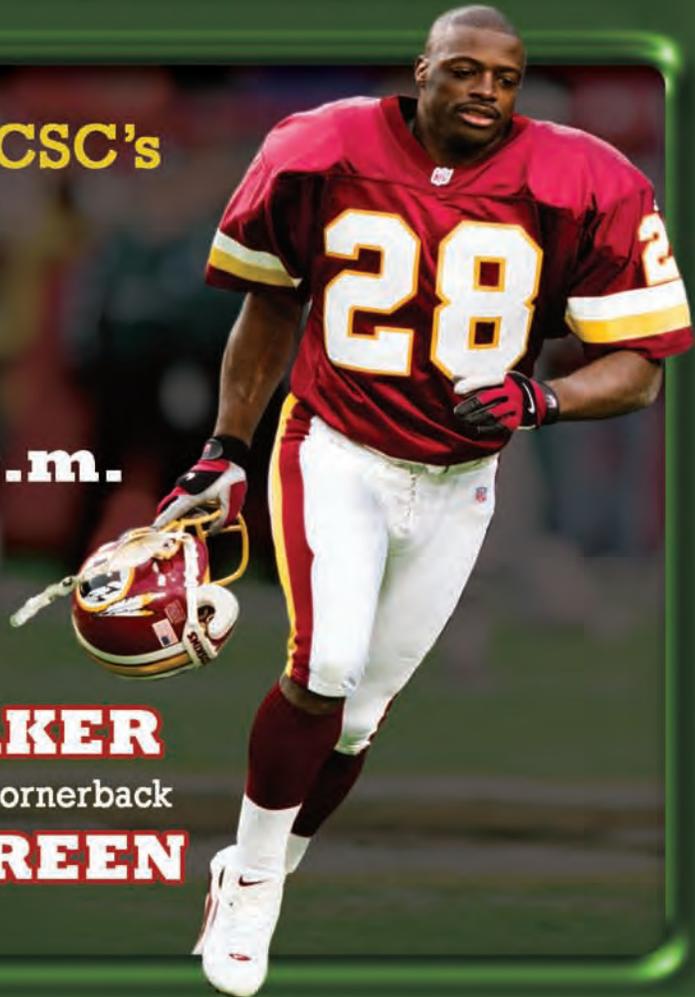
Learn about MCSC's
Game Plan for
2010-2014

**Thursday,
Oct. 15 @ 1 p.m.
in front of
Bldg. 2200**

GUEST SPEAKER

Pro Football Hall of Fame Cornerback

DARRELL GREEN



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(attendance required for eligibility)