

SILVER ANNIVERSARY

25 Years of Acquisition Excellence



A message from the COMMANDER



To all team members of Marine Corps Systems Command:

Semper Fidelis!



F.L. Kelley
Brigadier General
U.S. Marine Corps

SILVER ANNIVERSARY

25 Years of Acquisition Excellence

25th Anniversary Edition

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On the Cover: More than 20 members of the Command (not all pictured) have been with Marine Corps Systems Command since its beginning 25 years ago as the Marine Corps Research, Development and Acquisition Command. See related story on Page 21. (Photo and graphic art by Kirk Nelson)



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SILVER ANNIVERSARY

Command celebrates 25 years of acquisition excellence

Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC) traces its beginning to the Marine Corps Research, Development and Acquisition Command (MCRDAC), which the Marine Corps established Nov. 18, 1987, as required by the Goldwater-Nichols Act. With that in mind, MCSC is celebrating a quarter century of acquisition excellence during November.

“Marine Corps Systems Command continues to provide invaluable support to the Marine Corps by its relentless focus on equipping our warfighters with the tools they need to defend the Nation, and when their mission is complete, to return home safely,” said Mr. Sean Stackley, Assistant Secretary of the Navy (ASN) for Research, Development and

Acquisition (RDA). “The team of professionals who make up Marine Corps Systems Command, both military and civilian, perform well beyond their numbers. They operate by the highest standards of the Corps – strong warrior ethos, strong work ethic and an iron grip on every dollar within their reach. Under tough fiscal constraints, MCSC is leading in the drive to place greater care in determining ‘what we buy’ and greater weight on improving ‘how we buy what we buy.’”

“I congratulate Marine Corps Systems Command on the occasion of their 25th Anniversary,” said General James Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC). “Since General Gray [General Alfred Gray, then-CMC] established the Marine Corps Research, Development and Acquisition Command in November 1987, MCSC has streamlined the systems acquisition process, incorporated the operating forces in identifying deficiencies and established clear lines of authority, responsibility and accountability.”

Those were Gray’s goals for the new acquisition command 25 years ago.

“The current process, which has evolved over a number of years, is less responsive to the needs of the operating forces than desired, is not well suited to the streamlining initiatives occurring within the DOD [Department of Defense] and is slow to exploit emerging technology,” Gray said Nov. 18, 1987, in an all-Marine message (ALMAR) to the fleet. “Greater involvement of the operating forces in identifying deficiencies in existing systems and in defining new requirements is required. The time it takes to translate a requirement into a developmental effort must be shortened to ensure that technology advances are not encumbered by a lengthy staffing and review

process. The number of entities involved in the research, development and acquisition process must be kept to an absolute minimum to ensure that combat systems are fielded to meet the threat and are logistically supportable, affordable and acquired in a timely way.”

“Commandant General Al Gray recognized the requirement to formalize our acquisition process and provide career status for our acquisition specialists, which resulted in MCRDAC,” said General John Dailey (retired), MCRDAC Commanding General from October 1989 to July 1990 and the former Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps.

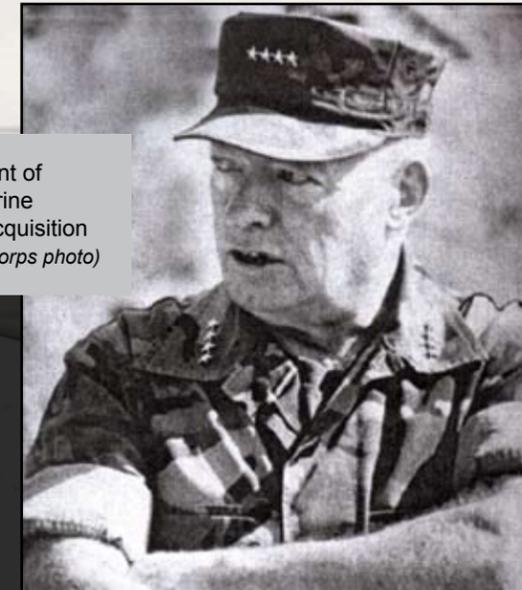
Mr. James Webb, then-Secretary of the Navy, approved the CMC’s request to establish MCRDAC.

“You have my best wishes for every success in this new and significant endeavor,” Webb wrote in a memorandum for the CMC dated Nov. 12, 1987. “It holds much promise for improving the way we develop, procure and support equipment for our Fleet Marine Forces.”

In addition to improving the acquisition process, MCRDAC was organized to comply with DOD and Department of the Navy initiatives, according to the Marine Corps History Division. MCRDAC took the majority of the following separate activities and integrated them into one: the Development Center at Quantico, Va., the current Headquarters Marine Corps staff of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Research, Development and Studies, and the Acquisition Division of the Deputy Chief of Staff of Installations and Logistics.

In March of 1990 the assault amphibious vehicle program transferred from the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) to MCRDAC, and then on Jan. 1, 1992, as directed by Marine Corps Order 5000, the

General Alfred Gray, 29th Commandant of the Marine Corps, established the Marine Corps Research, Development and Acquisition Command on Nov. 18, 1987. (Marine Corps photo)

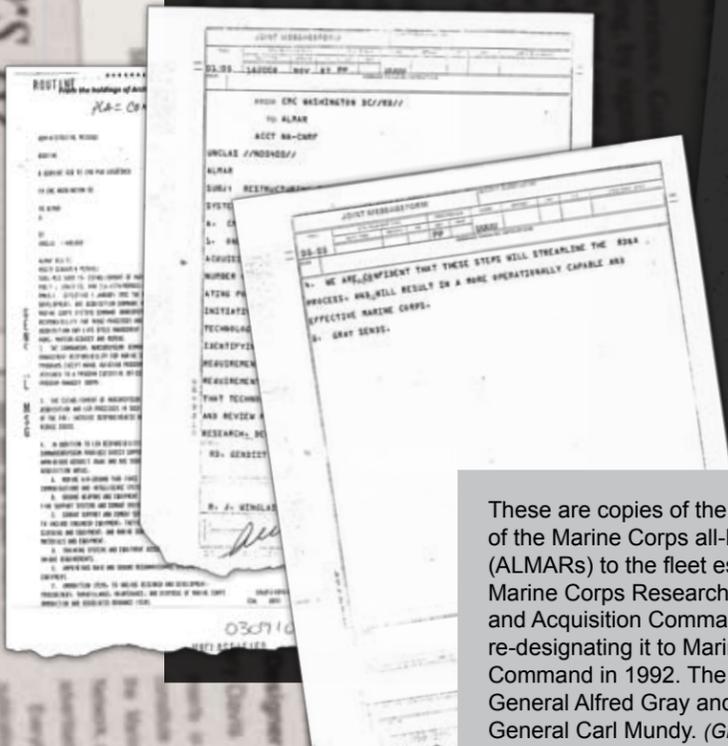


Corps re-designated MCRDAC as MCSC.

“Marine Corps Systems Command has responsibility for those processes and functions that involve system acquisition and life cycle management formerly assigned to HQMC [Headquarters Marine Corps], MARCORLOGBASES [Marine Corps logistics bases] and MCRDAC,” said General Carl Mundy, then-CMC, in an ALMAR on Feb. 3, 1992. “The establishment of MCSC is intended to streamline the acquisition and LCM [life cycle management] processes in such a way as to improve readiness of the Fleet Marine Force [FMF], increase responsiveness and support for the FMF, and reduce costs.”

That same year additional acquisition programs transferred from NAVSEA to MCSC. In 1995 Automated Manpower and Logistics Support Systems migrated from HQMC and mission requirements for Total Life Cycle Support emerged. In 2001 the Application Support Branch transferred from HQMC, and the Command implemented a new realignment. Two years later MCSC moved into its remodeled facility at Hospital Point. In 2011, the Command completed its transition to a competency-aligned organization, and this year MCSC changed its program management offices and restuctured to be consistent and aligned with current DOD and Navy Acquisition regulations.

MCSC reports directly to ASN(RDA), and serves as the Department of the Navy’s systems command for Marine Corps ground weapon and information technology system programs in order to equip and



These are copies of the two Commandant of the Marine Corps all-Marine messages (ALMARs) to the fleet establishing the Marine Corps Research, Development and Acquisition Command in 1987 and re-designating it to Marine Corps Systems Command in 1992. The first ALMAR is by General Alfred Gray and the second by General Carl Mundy. (Graphic by Kirk Nelson)



One of Marine Corps Research, Development and Acquisition Command’s original guidons is framed and on display in Building 2200’s Conference Room 125. (Photo by Bill Johnson-Miles)

Mr. Sean Stackley, Assistant Secretary of the Navy (ASN) for Research, Development and Acquisition (RDA), speaks with Brigadier General Frank Kelley, Commander, Marine Corps Systems Command, and his wife Traci during the Sunset Parade reception in 2011. (Photo by Bill Johnson-Miles)



sustain Marine forces with full-spectrum, current and future expeditionary and crisis response capabilities. Over the years the Command has also been the Commandant's agent for acquisition and sustainment of systems and equipment used to accomplish the Marine Corps warfighting mission.

"Marines around the globe appreciate MCSC's often unsung efforts in providing the Corps the right equipment at the right time to accomplish the mission," Amos said. "MCSC enables a technological advantage that helps Marines shoot straighter, move faster and communicate more effectively so they can continue to win the Nation's battles in every clime and place, every time."

From its inception as MCRDAC, through the transition to MCSC, providing the warfighter the wherewithal to execute the mission has been the top priority for its professional workforce and their supported partners.

"I would describe the last 25 years as a period of steady growth in the professional skills and abilities of our workforce, including both the Marines and civilian employees who form the Marine Corps Systems Command team," said Richard Bates, MCSC Assistant Commander for Programs. "What began as a fledging acquisition organization in 1987, made up of separate elements of the Service Headquarters, the former Development Center and program offices from Navy systems commands, has evolved into a well-designed and efficient acquisition organization staffed with highly qualified acquisition professionals in both MCSC and in our supported Program Executive Offices."

"MCSC's outstanding team of civilian and

active-duty Marines routinely delivers superior results despite short timelines and limited resources," Amos said. "Over the past decade at war in Iraq and Afghanistan, their efforts have materially contributed to our many victories and have without a doubt saved lives on the battlefield."

"Through their excellence over the last 25 years in the acquisition and sustainment of the systems and equipment for the warfighting mission," Mr. Stackley added, "this Command enables the Marine Corps to continue to be the most capable expeditionary fighting force in the world."

— By Bill Johnson-Miles, MCSC Corporate Communications



SILVER ANNIVERSARY

25 Years of Acquisition Excellence

Leadership

Consistent LEADERSHIP

Commanding Generals, Commanders guide MCRDAC, MCSC

Since the establishment of Marine Corps Research, Development and Acquisition Command (MCRDAC) in 1987 and continuing with Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC) in 1992, the Command has been consistently led by 11 Commanding Generals and Commanders, ranging from the rank of Brigadier General to Major General.

After leaving this Command some attained even higher positions serving the Marine Corps, such as the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps (ACMC). Some also made their mark in the history books, such as becoming the first female U.S. military officer to wear three stars. The following are short biographies of the men and women who took the helm and steered the Command along its course in the Marine Corps and the Department of the Navy.

would later add a Masters degree in Systems Science Management from the University of Southern California. He was commissioned a Marine Second Lieutenant through the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps Program in 1956. After completing instruction at The Basic School, Quantico, Va., he underwent flight training at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Fla., where he was designated a Naval Aviator.

His tours of interest include Aircraft Maintenance Officer of the first CH-53A squadron, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron-463, with which he participated in combat operations in Vietnam; Project Manager

Major General Ray Franklin Commanding General, MCRDAC, November 1987 – October 1989

Major General Franklin, whose home of record is Miles City, Mont., graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Washington and



for Advanced Infantry Weapons Systems, Advanced Research Projects Agency, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Washington, D.C.; Commander, Forward Headquarters, Element, Rear Deployment Joint Task Force (renamed the United States Central Command), Tampa, Fla.; and Deputy Chief of Staff for Research, Development and Studies, Headquarters Marine Corps.

While serving as MCRDAC's first Commanding General, he also served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Engineering and Systems. Now retired, Major General Franklin serves as a defense consultant, primarily on issues of amphibious warfare and force projection.

General John Dailey
Commanding General, MCRDAC,
October 1989 – July 1990

General Dailey, born in Quantico, Va., was commissioned a Second Lieutenant upon his graduation from the University of California at Los Angeles in June 1956. He completed The Basic School prior to

flight training and was designated a Naval Aviator. His operational experience includes more than 6,000 flying hours in fighters, light attack, reconnaissance, electronic warfare and transport aircraft along with helicopters.

During two tours in Vietnam he flew 450 combat missions. Returning from overseas in May 1973, General Dailey was assigned to the Aviation Weapons Requirements Branch, Headquarters Marine Corps, Washington, D.C. In 1975 he entered the National War College and, after graduation, returned to the Aviation Plans and Programs Branch at Headquarters Marine Corps.

He would go on to command Marine Aircraft Group-II, 3d Marine Aircraft Wing, Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro, Calif., and 2d Marine Aircraft Wing, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic, Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, N.C. General Dailey assumed his MCRDAC command in August 1989 and was appointed to the grade of Lieutenant General in November 1989. He was appointed to the rank of General and assumed the ACMC post in August 1990. After retiring from the Marine Corps he became the Associate Deputy Administrator for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and is now the Director of the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum.

Major General Jeremiah Pearson
Commanding General, MCRDAC,
July 1990 – June 1991

Major General Pearson graduated from the Georgia Institute of Technology in June 1960 with a Bachelor's Degree in Aeronautical Engineering and began his military career as a Naval Aviator. He then was assigned to the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing, Beaufort, S.C., and conducted his first operational tour aboard the aircraft carrier USS Independence.

In the mid-1960s, Major General Pearson

graduated from the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School and joined the Flight Test Division. He then joined the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing in Da Nang, Vietnam, and flew more than 400 combat missions. In the early 1970s, Major General Pearson served in Flight Test at the Naval Missile Test Center at Point Mugu, Calif., was assigned to Marine Corps Headquarters in Washington, D.C., as the Aviation Plans officer, and was nominated as a Marine Corps Space Shuttle pilot. He assumed command of Marine Aircraft Group 11 in 1984 and later became Deputy Commander of Marine Central Command in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, during Operation Desert Shield/Storm. While serving in Vietnam and the first Gulf War, Major General Pearson was awarded two Distinguished Service Medals, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star and 26 air medals.

After serving as MCRDAC Commanding General, he retired from the Marine Corps and became the Head of Manned Space Flight for the National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA) in Washington, D.C. He spent the last 20 years of his life living in and serving the city of San Juan Capistrano, Calif. Major General Pierson passed away in June this year.

Lieutenant General Robert Tiebout
Commander, MCRDAC and MCSC,
June 1991 – June 1992

Lieutenant General Robert Tiebout graduated from Memphis State University with a Bachelor of Science degree and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Marine Corps in October 1961. He then attended the Combat Engineer Officer School at Camp Lejeune, N.C., and was subsequently assigned as a Platoon Commander of Landing Support Company Service Battalion, 3rd Marine Division in Okinawa, Japan.

He would deploy to Vietnam in 1967 with the 1st Marine Division, where he served as the Company Commander of "A" Company, 9th Engineer Battalion and Battalion Operations Officer. He would return to various assignments, including Head of the Garrison



Mobile Equipment Section and Head of the Engineer Section, Materiel Division, Installations and Logistics Department at Headquarters Marine Corps; attending both Marine Corps Staff and Command College at Quantico,

Va., and Naval War College, Newport, R.I.; and the Commanding Officer (CO) of Marine Corps Engineering School.

His first association with MCRDAC was as the Program Manager for Marine Air-Ground Task Force Command and Control in 1990. He would next serve as MCRDAC's Deputy Commanding General (CG) before taking over as the Command's CG. Following his assigned duty with MCRDAC and MCSC, Lieutenant General Tiebout served as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Installations and Logistics before retiring in 1994. He currently resides in Townsend, Tenn.

Lieutenant General James Brabham
Commander, MCSC, June 1992 – May 1994

Lieutenant General Brabham graduated from Cornell University in June 1962 with a Bachelor of Civil Engineering degree and received his commission. He would graduate from The Basic School in December of the same year and embark on several tours, reporting to the 1st Shore Party Battalion in Chu Lai, Vietnam, in August 1966, where he served as CO of Company A, and subsequently CO of



Headquarters and Service Company. He would return to Vietnam in April 1971 to serve as the Engineer Advisor to the Vietnamese Marine Corps, remaining in that capacity through the North Vietnamese Easter Offensive of April 1972.

Lieutenant General Brabham's assignments, among others, include Program Coordinator for the Air Cushion Landing Craft Development and Acquisition Program on the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations, Washington, D.C.; Command of the 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion, Camp Lejeune, N.C.; Deputy Director for Logistics, J-4, USCENTCOM, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.; Commanding General, 1st Force Service Support Group, FMF, Camp Pendleton, Calif., which he would command during its participation in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

He was assigned duty as Director of Marine Air-Ground Training and Education Center before he took command at MCSC. Following MCSC he served as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Installations and Logistics, his final tour in the Marine Corps. Following his retirement, Lieutenant General Brabham became a technical consultant and currently resides in Riverview, Fla.

Lieutenant General Carol Mutter
Commander, MCSC,
June 1994 – July 1996

Lieutenant General Mutter was commissioned a Second Lieutenant upon her graduation from the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley, Colo. She graduated with a degree in Mathematics Education and later with a Master of Arts degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College at Newport, R.I., and a Master of Science degree from Salve Regina College, also in Newport.

Her tours of note include Project Officer for Marine Air Command and Control Systems at Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity (which falls under MCSC), Camp Pendleton, Calif.; Financial Management Officer at the Development Center, Quantico, Va.; and Division Chief, U.S. Space Command, among other tours.

She would return to Quantico in June 1991 as a Brigadier General to serve as MCSC's Deputy Commander. Dual-hatted, she also served as the Program Manager for all Marine Corps Command and Control Systems. Afterward she assumed command of the 3rd Force Service Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force, U.S. Marine Forces Pacific in Okinawa, Japan. She would again return to Quantico to serve as the MCSC Commander with the rank of Major General. She is the first woman in the Marine Corps to be promoted to that grade. Her last assignment was as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, retiring with the rank of



Lieutenant General in 1999. She is the first woman in the history of the U.S. armed forces to be appointed to a three-star grade. Currently an independent consultant for several companies, she makes Indiana her home.

General Michael Williams
Commander, MCSC,
July 1996 – July 1998

General Williams, a Baltimore native, was commissioned a second lieutenant in 1967 upon his graduation from the U.S. Naval Academy with a Bachelor of Science degree. He then completed Naval Flight Training and was designated a Naval Aviator. He would go on to earn Masters degrees from the University of Southern California and the College of Naval Warfare during his career.

His operational tours include various squadron assignments in the United States, Republic of Vietnam and Okinawa, including Presidential Helicopter Pilot with Marine Helicopter Squadron One; CO of Marine Helicopter Training Squadron 301; Executive Officer and CO of Marine Air Group (MAG) 26, serving as the MAG's leader during Desert Shield and Desert Storm; assistant Division G-3 for 3rd Marine Division and CG of 2nd Force Service Support Group and Commander Joint Task Force 160, responsible for providing humanitarian relief for Haitian and Cuban immigrants in Guantanamo Naval Base, Cuba. His staff assignments include Marine Corps Program Development Officer and branch head in Requirements and Programs Division, Headquarters Marine Corps; Vice Director for Operational Plans and Interoperability, J-7, Joint Staff; MCSC Commander; and Deputy Chief of Staff for Programs and Resources.

General Williams assumed the position of Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps (ACMC) in September of 2000. He served as ACMC for two years and retired from active duty in 2002.



Brigadier General James Feigley
Commander, MCSC,
August 1998 – July 2002

Brigadier General Feigley joined the Marine Corps in 1969 and went on active duty in 1972 after graduating from the University of Wisconsin with a Bachelor of Science degree. He is also a graduate of the Amphibious Warfare School, Marine Corps Command and Staff College, and the Defense Systems Management College.

He became the MCSC Commander after several acquisition-related command and duty tours, including Project Officer, Weapons Branch, Deputy Chief of Staff for Installations and Logistics,



Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps; Project Officer, Armored Combat Vehicle Directorate, MCRDAC; Advanced Amphibious Vehicle Project Officer, Naval Sea Systems Command; and the Assistant Program Manager, Department of the Navy, Direct Reporting Program Manager, Advanced Amphibious Assault. He also served as the Program Manager for the Advanced Amphibious Assault Vehicle from 1993 to 1998, his duty preceding his time at MCSC.

Brigadier General Feigley retired from the Marine Corps at the end of his tour with MCSC. His personal decorations include the Legion of Merit and the Distinguished Service Medal, which was presented by the Deputy Secretary of Defense. He has served as a member of the Applied Energetics Board of Directors since June 2008 and as Chairman since April 2009.

Major General William Catto
Commanding General, MCSC,
July 2002 – June 2006

Major General Catto graduated from Bethel College and earned his Masters degree from Webster University. He spent his first 13 years in the Marine Corps on various operational assignments, serving in Aircraft Maintenance, Administration and Operations departments. He served with 7th Marines as the Air Officer and then Regimental Operations Officer. In his flying assignments, the Major General has more than 4,100 flight hours in 13 aircraft types.

One of his non-flying assignments would take him to Washington, D.C., to the Office of the Secretary of Defense; Programs, Analysis and Evaluations; Cost Analysis Improvement Group; Weapons Systems Cost Analysis Division. He would command Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron One before



serving concurrently as the CG, Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory and Vice Chief of Naval Research, Office of Naval Research. After MCSC, he served as the Chief of Staff, U.S. European Command, his last assignment before retiring.

Major General Catto served for more than 10 years in CO or CG assignments at the Lieutenant Colonel, Colonel, Brigadier General and Major General ranks, including four years as the MCSC CG. The retired Marine currently serves as Raytheon's Director for Strategic Insight and Interdependent Operations, and lives in Syracuse, N.Y.

Brigadier General Michael Brogan
Commander, MCSC,
September 2006 – July 2010

Brigadier General Brogan and MCSC's current Commander, Brigadier General Frank Kelley, are both Notre Dame alums. Before being commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Marine Corps, Brigadier General Brogan graduated in 1980 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemical Engineering. He also holds a Masters Degree in Business from Webster University, a Masters in National Resource Strategy from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces and is a graduate of the Program Management Course at the Defense Systems Management College.

In 1989, the Orrville, Ohio, native assumed command of Company A, 3rd Amphibious Assault Battalion, and during Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the Company supported 1st Battalion, 5th Marines and was a part of Task Force Ripper. In

1995, the Brigadier General reported to the Office of the Direct Reporting Program Manager, Advanced Amphibious Assault (DRPM AAA) and served as the Survivability Project Officer. In 1998, he became the Program Manager for the Advanced Amphibious Assault Vehicle Survivability Program.

He reported to MCSC in 2002 for duties as Product Group Director of Infantry Weapons Systems. In 2004, Brigadier General Brogan returned to the



Office of DRPM AAA for duty as the Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle Program Manager. While serving as the MCSC Commander, Brigadier General Brogan also became the Joint Program Executive Officer for the Joint Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle program. He retired from the military in 2011.

Brigadier General Frank Kelley
Commander, MCSC,
July 2010 – Present

Brigadier General Kelley, a native of Philadelphia, graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 1983 with a degree in Aerospace Engineering. Upon completion of Officer Candidate School, he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant.

After flight training in Pensacola, Fla., and completing EA-6B Prowler training at Whidbey Island, Wash., Brigadier General Kelley reported to Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron where he participated in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Following assignments with different squadrons and air wings, he reported to the Pentagon as an action officer



to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for the Expeditionary Forces Program.

His first assignment at MCSC was as the Program Manager for Unmanned Systems. Brigadier General Kelley's next assignment was Military Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition. In 2007 he was assigned as MCSC's

Program Manager for Training Systems in Orlando, Fla. In 2009 he was reassigned as MCSC's Chief of Staff and took the helm as Commander in 2010.

—By Carden Hedelt and Bill Johnson-Miles, MCSC Corporate Communications

Former MCSC Commander earned four stars, became ACMC

General Michael Williams retired from the Marine Corps in 2002 after 42 years in the armed services – seven years in the Navy, 35 in the Corps. The last two years he served as the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps (ACMC) with four stars on each of his shoulders.

But two of the 42 years he served as the Commander of Marine Corps Systems Command

(MCSC) provided him with irreplaceable knowledge that helped General Williams

guide the Marine Corps as its Assistant Commandant – as well as the Deputy Commandant of Staff for Programs and Resources.

“My time at MCSC made me a much more effective Deputy Commandant for Programs and Resources (P&R) and a more effective ACMC,” General Williams said. “I was able to speak knowledgeably in the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) on acquisition issues and felt more confident in my decisions on programs and resource allocation.”

General Williams got the word that he would be serving two years at the helm of the still-young MCSC when he was the Director of Marine Corps Staff at Headquarters, Marine Corps, Washington D.C., in 1995. Like any new post, there were concerns, but this one was larger than the others.

“My big concern was that I was not an acquisition professional,” he said. “I was excited to be exposed to the world of acquisition, but I was really worried about my lack of knowledge.”

General Williams was able to augment his knowledge about the acquisition process thanks to Defense Acquisition University before he arrived at MCSC. He said that a few of his previous posts gave him

some insight into his new job: his three years as the Deputy Commandant for P&R; the branch head in Requirements and Programs Division, Headquarters

Marine Corps; and his two years as the Commanding General of the 2nd Force Service Support Group.

“My biggest challenges were my own lack of knowledge and the perceptions of the members of the Command that I was an ‘outsider’ who didn’t know the business,” General Williams said – and he added that the perceptions about him were at least partially true.

Of course, there is no better teacher than firsthand experience. His first lesson was in the cooperative nature that permeates the acquisition branch for the Marine Corps.

“The most important thing I learned was that acquisition is a team sport,” he said. “The requirements folks, the operators, industry and acquisition have to work together for success. To the extent that we make this an adversarial process we all lose.”

General Williams made sure to extend the “team sport” concept outside the walls of MCSC to industry, setting up the first Industry Day to allow clear communication between decision makers within MCSC and partners in industry. Even today, Industry Days with MCSC happen frequently, as they provide a chance for face-to-face interaction in which MCSC can clearly state its ideas and projected demands to members of industry.

Taking the “team sport” concept even further, General Williams recognized that the entire team within MCSC needed to be at its very best to be able to accomplish its mission. So, during his time at MCSC, General Williams set up programs of professional education for members of the Command.

Looking back on his time at MCSC, General Williams did not single out any particular moment as one that defines his time here.

“I left MCSC with a great deal of satisfaction,” he said. “I had certainly grown as a Marine, and I believed I had moved the Command a few steps

down the road to greater professionalism.”

Although MCSC has progressed beyond where General Williams left it in 1996, he thinks that there is still room for improvement.

General Williams said that the Command ought to do a better job of “educating the Marine Corps. Reach out whenever possible to help Marines understand the process and the rules of acquisition. Not technically, but enough so that they understand what MCSC does for the Corps and what it can do for them.”

– By Carden Hedelt, MCSC Corporate Communications

General Michael Williams, then-Commander of Marines Corps Systems Command, attends the Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence for Air Defense (C4IAD) Halloween party and chili cook-off in 1996 with Annette Baines. The General had just finished his physical training for the day and was asked to be a judge. Baines currently works with the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle Program in Michigan. (Kelly Gibson photo)



Wilma Tuttle, currently with Resource Management, receives the Commander’s Distinguished Performance Award in 1998 from General Michael Williams, then-Commander of Marines Corps Systems Command. At the time Tuttle was the Chief of Staff’s secretary. (Wilma Tuttle photo)



General Michael Williams, then-Commander of Marines Corps Systems Command, presents an award in 1997 to the Process Action Team for the Administrative staff, including (from left) Wanda McLennan, retired in 2011; Pam Null, a plankowner and member of the Command’s Quarter Century Club who currently works for Workforce Management and Development; and Jacqueline Brent, currently with International Programs. (Wilma Tuttle photo)

GENERAL WILLIAMS

LIEUTENANT GENERAL MUTTER



Then-Major General Carol Mutter (center), Commander, Marine Corps Systems Command, officiates at a retirement ceremony in 1995. (Photo by Lynne Dietz)

MCSC Commander became first female three-star

Retired Marine Corps Lieutenant General Carol Mutter is the first woman in the history of the U.S. armed forces to be appointed to a three-star grade. She is also the first woman in the Marine Corps to be promoted to Major General, a promotion she received just prior to taking command of Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC). The history-making female Marine held that position from June 1994 through July 1996.

"Most still called us MCRDAC then, I believe," Mutter said, "Marine Corps Research, Development and Acquisition Command. The headquarters was in Hochmoth Hall with elements of the Command spread out in several buildings, including temporary trailers."

Hochmoth Hall is now the home of the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, located on Branch Avenue near the Quantico Naval Medical Clinic, not too far from the Marine Corps Warfighting Lab (MCWL). MCWL is



Retired Lieutenant General Carol Mutter (left) speaks with Mr. James Smerchansky, Deputy Commander for Systems Engineering, Interoperability, Architectures and Technology, and Mrs. Ann McDermott, then-Deputy Commander for Resource Management, at the 2011 Modern Day Marine Exposition. (Photo by Bill Johnson-Miles)

one of Mutter's success stories.

"We worked with the Commandant to stand up the Warfighting Lab," the Lieutenant General said. "I was concerned that it was difficult to balance the investments for current programs with the future requirements that were not well defined yet. Plus, we needed a way to check out emerging technologies and get them into the field quickly."

MCSC provided the initial billets, personnel and funding to start up MCWL, which was established in 1995. Besides this success, the former Commander discussed a couple of additional accomplishments.

"We also pushed hard for more commercial-off-the-shelf gear and performance-based contracting

one of Mutter's success stories.

based on standards," she said. "This was a real paradigm change in the way the military contractors were used to doing business. It took a lot of persistence on the part of those at SysCom [MCSC]."

Change isn't new at MCSC. Mutter also changed the Command's organization chart by providing additional support to all Program Managers (PMs).

"I started providing logistics, contracting and engineering expertise by assigning those specialists to each PM that had a 'basket' of projects or programs," Mutter said. "It was matrix management that was very difficult for a military organization to adapt to. We were about 70 percent military and 30 percent civilian then. I think it's just about the reverse now."

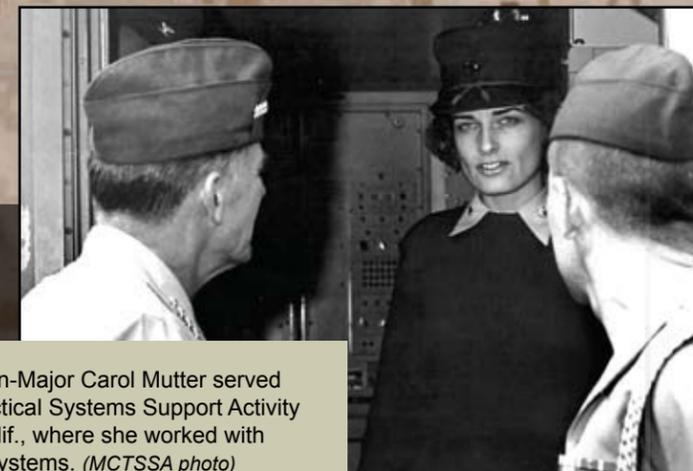
The Lieutenant General had previously served at MCSC as the Command's Deputy Commander in late 1991 and early 1992. During that period, Mutter, a Brigadier General at the time, also became the PM for command and control (C2) systems, bringing many programs under her one hat.

"The C2 systems were managed by multiple PMs, mostly Colonels, resulting in duplication of effort and other inefficiencies," she said. "Plus, there were difficulties in ensuring these systems could talk to each other so the field commander could have a complete picture of the battlefield. I had worked C2 systems at the Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity [MCTSSA] from 1975-1979, so I had a great background to pull everything together."

Stephen D'Lugos, a retired Marine who now works for the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicle Joint Program Office, was one of the Colonels Mutter worked with on C2 systems and later when she was MCSC's Commander.

"She is responsible for establishing the Systems Integration Environment at MCTSSA," D'Lugos said. "As a Commander, she was aggressive in her leadership and always demonstrated the courage of her convictions. She had a strategic vision for networks and software development. She was comfortable delegating authority and a pleasure to work for."

What she remembers most about her many jobs with MCSC is the outstanding workforce.



From 1975 to 1979, then-Major Carol Mutter served at the Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity at Camp Pendleton, Calif., where she worked with command and control systems. (MCTSSA photo)

"We had, and you still do have, a lot of very capable and professional Marines, including civilian Marines, who will go the extra mile to provide the best equipment in the shortest timeframe," stated Mutter, who is currently an independent consultant for several companies. She is also on several advisory boards and serves as a Senior Fellow at the Joint Forces Staff College.

The retired Lieutenant General spent 31 years in the Corps, and many say she blazed the trail for women wearing the Eagle, Globe and Anchor.

"I certainly had some firsts," Mutter said. "But there were many other women before me who blazed the trail and opened doors I didn't have to struggle to open. I didn't view myself as a 'female leader' until I was a Lieutenant Colonel and discovered I was the senior female Marine on the base. But if I've had any success, it has to be attributed to teamwork and the great work of many professionals on the team."

Her advice to other female Marines: "Keep up the great work! You're doing things we never imagined doing and doing everything very capably. Because of you, more and more doors are opening for women in the Corps."

— By Bill Johnson-Miles, MCSC Corporate Communications



REFLECTIONS



Leaders reflect on MCRDAC and MCSC

Marine Corps Systems Command's (MCSC) headquarters is currently located at Hospital Point in the old Naval hospital (built in 1939) on Marine Corps Base Quantico, but the Command, starting with Marine Corps Research, Development and Acquisition Command (MCRDAC) in 1987, didn't begin in the Quantico area.

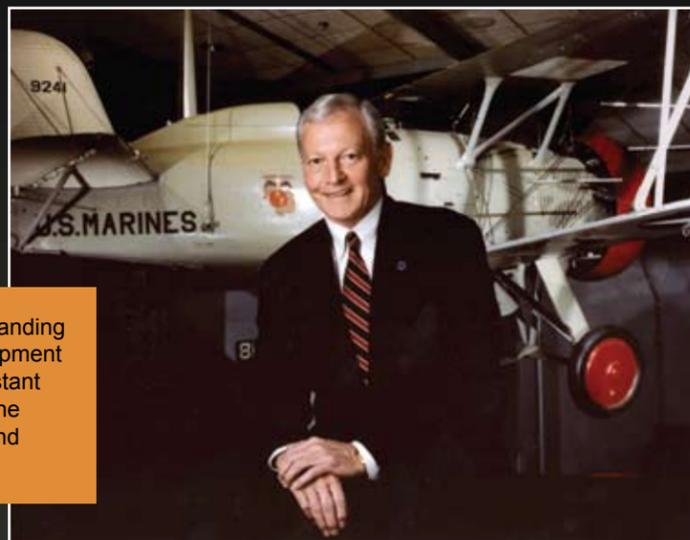
"Our offices were originally in Ballston [an Arlington, Va., neighborhood] while we worked our way into facilities at Quantico, which was not an easy task," said General John Dailey (retired), MCRDAC Commanding General (CG) from October 1989 to July 1990 and the former Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps (ACMC). "We traded some waterfront property near the Marina for the old laundry building, which gave us space but not much luxury. General Gray [then-Commandant of the Marine Corps General Alfred Gray] had a unique way of deciding when a new command or function would stand up. He would ask someone in the crowd when their birthday was and then declare that was the day the new command would stand up. They came to me and said, 'What should we do? There is no way we can stand up by then.' I told them to make a sign that said Marine Corps Systems Command and hang it on the front

of the building. We stood up on time but it took awhile to get the system moving."

Even though Dailey was in charge for only a year before he became ACMC, he did follow the Command and watch it develop. In 1992 the Marine Corps transferred all functions of MCRADC into MCSC.

"General Gray was not happy with us for changing the name because he thought MCRADC was a more accurate description of the mission," the former CG said. "The problem was that nobody outside the Marine Corps knew what it meant or what it did. Changing the name to Marine Corps Systems Command aligned us with the rest of the world and got us a seat at the table in the joint world."

When the Command changed its name, most of MCSC was located at Quantico, but some of the



Retired General John Dailey, former Commanding General of Marine Corps Research, Development and Acquisition Command and former Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, is now the Director of the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum. (Smithsonian photo)

In 2005 then-Brigadier General William Catto (right), Commanding General, Marine Corps Systems Command, and Colonel Jeff Krongaard, Officer in Charge, Marine Armor Installation Site, cut a ribbon signifying the site's full operational capabilities for the installation of Marine Armor Kits on the High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle A2. (Photo by Staff Sergeant Michael Reed)



Brigadier General Michael Brogan, Commander, Marine Corps Systems Command, speaks to reporters during an event at the Pentagon displaying the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All-Terrain Vehicle in 2009. (Photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Molly Burgess)

Command was still operating near Arlington.

"The majority of the Program Managers (PMs) were located at Quantico, but the command element, fiscal personnel and a few PMs, Ammunition and others were at Headquarters Marine Corps," said Lieutenant General Robert Tiebout (retired), MCRDAC and MCSC Commander from June 1991 to June 1992. "At Quantico we were located at the old FBI building and several other buildings that were adjacent to the old FBI building. I believe the building that was utilized for the personnel at Headquarters Marine Corps was called the Commonwealth Building, and we shared it with I&L [Installations and Logistics] in Clarendon [another Arlington neighborhood]."

By the time Major General William Catto (retired), MCSC Commanding General from July 2002 to June 2006, came on board, the command element had moved entirely to Quantico.

"The Command was located on main side Quantico in a building now remodeled and hosting the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity [Hochmuth Hall]," Catto remembered. "We moved the Command into the Hospital Point buildings during the spring of 2003."

What the former Commanding General remembers most is "clearly, the superb Marines and government service professionals who were part of the staff. The team during those years was professional and absolutely committed to supporting their Marines who were engaged in combat operations."

The Command's follow-on leader concurred with that reflection. Brigadier General Michael Brogan (retired), MCSC Commander from September 2006 to July 2010, said what touched him the most was "the dedication of the Marines, Sailors and civil servants who work at Marine Corps Systems Command and their singular focus on supporting our Marines and Sailors in theater."

However, Brogan did point to the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) joint vehicle program as the Command's single greatest success while he was in charge.

"The most rewarding aspect of MRAP was the tangible difference it made in the lives of joint and coalition force members who encountered improvised explosive devices while riding in one of these vehicles," he said.

Even though MRAP was the largest, the former Commander said there were many great successes during his tenure.

Command plankowners look back on quarter century of service

“Every single project or program, however, that responded to an Urgent Universal Needs Statement or a Joint Urgent Operational Needs Statement contributed to our warfighters in Iraq and Afghanistan,” Brogan stated.

According to Major General Catto, the biggest material successes for MCSC during his time were the completion of many systems for forces involved in combat operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom, including all three weapons in the artillery triumvirate, the Unit Operations Center for the infantry and air wing, the Internally Transportable Vehicle, three generations of vehicle armoring and body armor.

The former CG said body armor was one of the “most important decisions made during those years.” He pointed to the continuation of the body armor program even though the Army had dropped out of the effort because the initial Small Arms Protective Insert plates were four ounces too heavy.

“The decision to continue the body armor contract was made months before the war began but allowed for an ongoing production line for each service once the operational need was understood after commencement of combat operations,” Catto stated.

Like Catto and Brogan, Lieutenant General Tiebout also led MCSC while U.S. forces were involved in combat operations. The First Gulf War occurred during his tenure, and the Command found

ways to provide the necessary hardware and latest technology to theater in a timely manner.

“Some of the equipment was ‘off the shelf’ procured and others had very limited program testing,” Tiebout said. “There were some items that were not available, and we had to use all resources to find them. But I am honored to have served as the CG during the Gulf War effort.”

Command success during periods of war is critical, but success during peace time operations is also important.

“I don’t know that there was one ‘biggest’ success, but there were several that made me feel good about the job,” said General Michael Williams, a former ACMC and MCSC Commander from July 1996 to July 1998. “We had the first ‘Industry Day’ with our industry partners, and we started a program of professional education for members of the Command.”

Whether during peace or war, MCSC has been and continues to be essential.

“Marine Corps Systems Command is incredibly important to the Marine Corps, but it is not well understood and often not appreciated,” Brogan said. “As Marines, we like to control our own destiny, and in the world of acquisition the best way to do that is by having a talented, capable, professional acquisition workforce that fulfills the material requirements of our Corps.”

“It’s critical that Marines develop the materiel solution for their own requirements,” Catto added. “Marines should be supporting Marines in the critical endeavors of development, procurement and life-cycle support as only they truly understand the expeditionary environment associated with power projection from the sea.”

General Dailey agreed.

“Marine Corps Systems Command is critical to our future,” the former ACMC stated. “The things the Marine Corps needs to stay relevant will come through MCSC, either in cooperative developments or unique programs. They are managing our destiny.”

– By Bill Johnson-Miles, MCSC Corporate Communications



Leigh Baysden, currently of the Workforce Management Directorate, receives a letter of appreciation in 1992 from then-Major General Robert Tiebout, former Commander of Marine Corps Research, Development and Acquisition Command and Marine Corps Systems Command. (Baysden Photo)



Lisa Weaver, a 25-year Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC) employee now with the Command’s Workforce Management and Development office, receives a certificate of appreciation from Lawrence Kreitzer in 1999. Kreitzer was MCSC’s Executive Director at the time. (Weaver photo)

25 years since the formation of the Marine Corps Research, Development and Acquisition Command (MCRDAC), the forerunner of MCSC. Only a few people can say they have worked at the Command from inception to today, but those few share many memories of a quarter century of service.

Lisa Weaver, Awards Team Leader, was a clerk typist in the Administration and Support Division, Mail and Files Section in the Command Center at Quantico’s Hochmuth Hall.

“Although we had computers and printers,” she said, “we still used typewriters to prepare labels and various other documents. I have not seen a typewriter in the Command for a very long time.”

The Administration and Support Division has evolved through the years to Command Support Division to Command Support Directorate to what is now known as the Workforce Management and Development Directorate under the Deputy Commander for Resource Management. The Command has increased its manpower considerably.

“The military-to-civilian ratio has also changed,” Weaver added. “There were a lot more military than there were civilians. Now there are more civilians than there are military. In 1989, we had about 559 military and civilian personnel and 27 sections. Today, the Command has more than 2,600 military and civilian personnel.”

Sharron Mazza, currently the Financial Management Competency Manager, said her career highlights “include the amazing military and civilian individuals I have been fortunate to work with. The most memorable years were Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Overseas Contingency Operations



Sergeant Merlin Germany poses with actress Elisabeth Rohm at a Brooke Army Medical Center holiday ball in 2006. German suffered burns to 97 percent of his body after an improvised explosive device hit his convoy during a tour in Iraq. Micky Ball of Facilities, Services and Supply made sure the Sergeant had a special dress uniform to wear for that occasion. (Photo by Ben Sklar)

(OCO). I had worked with many Marines and civilians throughout my career, but never had I seen Marines deployed during wartime.”

Mazza helped fund and purchase equipment, clothing, ammunition and weapons for warfighters during peacetime, and then the Nation went to war.

“Desert Storm, OEF, OIF and OCO brought the true nature of my position to the forefront – support the warfighter,” she said. “It was a very emotional time for me as I watched some of my friends deploy under these

difficult circumstances. I received calls from Marines in theater needing specific equipment, and didn’t see some of my friends and colleagues return because they had given the ultimate sacrifice.”

War also struck Micky Ball of Facilities, Services and Supply in a much different way. In February 2005, Marine Sergeant Merlin Germany was burned over 97 percent of his body by a gas-fed improvised explosive device in Iraq. He was sent to Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio for what would be years of surgeries and treatment. After almost two years he vowed, painful or not, he was going to don his dress blues and whisk his mother away for a dance during the 2006 hospital ball.

With that, Ball and Charles Gold of MCSC’s Infantry Combat Equipment received a short-fuse request to prepare dress blues for the Sergeant. The entire uniform was a special order and size due to his healing burn injuries. At the ball he surprised his mother on the dance floor by taking her in his arms.

“Sadly,” Ball said, “Sergeant German lost his battle during minor lip surgery in April 2008. Every



“I am most proud of the fact that what I do has a direct impact on this country’s ability to win when we engage our enemies.”

-Barbara Fielding

so often I Google him to remind me of the sacrifices our Marines face on a daily basis.”

Larry Bochenek started his Marine Corps government service in November 1986, one year prior to MCRDAC’s standing up as a Command. He worked for the Program Support Office in the Rosslyn Building on Wilson Blvd. in Arlington, Va.

“The Command has changed tremendously over the last 25 years,” he said. “It’s more involved in the acquisition process and more involved with the Fleet – our customer. I am most proud of being a representative of this Command when I meet with our sister services. I am proud of fielding new capabilities to the Marine Air-Ground Task Force in support of their in-theater operations.”

For at least one 25-year MCSC veteran, coming to the Command represented a fresh start in life. “I had been out of work for several months in 1987,” said Leigh Baysden of the Workforce Management Directorate.

“The day before Thanksgiving I got a phone call from my new boss telling me I got the job,” Baysden said. “This was the beginning of a great relationship between me and the Marines, which was a family. I intended to stay six months before I moved back to the hospitality industry. However, I was a mom with a child who had needs, and life just went on. I became part of the culture that initially was so foreign to me.

“I look back at starting off as a GS-04 with a small child and see my child successfully grown up as a Coast Guard officer,” she added. “I have achieved two college degrees and enjoy the company of many friends. To me, success is measured by walking down the street and getting the opportunity to wave or speak to most of the people I see on the street. The smiles of others make my day.”

Everyone agreed that technology in MCSC has greatly advanced in the last two-plus decades. Wilma Tuttle of Resource Management recalled high-stress workloads and primitive equipment by today’s standards.

“Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm was

a very hectic time for the Command,” she said. “We typed a lot of naval messages during that time and had to do it with a typewriter. We used an OCR ball (font) to type. The messages had to be perfect, and there were many times I had to rip the sheet out of the typewriter and start over. It was frustrating, but you had to do it right. The same thing was true for fitness reports. We have come a long way from those days back in the ‘90s.”

Few people would stay with a job for 25 years without a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. Those who have been with MCSC from the beginning voiced similar feelings.

Joanne Martin of Combat Support Systems said the Command’s biggest success was “being able to adapt to whatever was thrown at us – changing locations, changing policies, changing personnel. I like the people I work with and the work I do.”

Added Barbara Fielding of Infantry Weapons Systems, “I love my job. As a senior Financial Manager I have trained hundreds of Marines and civilians in finance and enabled them to do a better job. I love working with Marines. They are the best group of people on the planet. It is very fulfilling to accomplish what we do every day. We may have a tough workload, but we have the best jobs in the world.

“I am most proud of the fact that what I do has a direct impact on this country’s ability to win when we engage our enemies,” she said. “How many people get to go home with that each night?”

– By Jim Katzaman, MCSC Corporate Communications



More than 25 members of the Command (not all are pictured) have been with Marine Corps Systems Command since its beginning 25 years ago as the Marine Corps Research, Development and Acquisition Command. (Photo and graphic art by Kirk Nelson)



Members of the Command’s Product Support Documents team attend a holiday party in 1996. Clockwise beginning left: Rod Montgomery, Bob Hashanka, Gladys Flemming, Linda Folsom and Robin Roberts. (Photo by Lynne Dietz)

QUARTER-CENTURY CLUB

Eight MCTSSA employees provide 25 years of warfighter support

Twenty-five years ago, Della Vincent, a retired Marine Sergeant Major, was becoming the Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity's (MCTSSA) newest civilian employee and Executive Secretary to the Activity's Commanding Officer (CO).

Vincent, who would eventually serve as Executive Secretary to nine MCTSSA COs, is one of eight civilian MCTSSA employees who has witnessed firsthand the establishing, transforming and renaming of the Marine Corps Research, Development and Acquisition Command into today's Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC), as well as the realigning of MCTSSA under that new Command.

For the last 25 years, an ever-increasing number of command, control, communications, computers and intelligence systems and technologies have been developed, tested and deployed, reflecting the expansion of technology and accomplishments of MCSC and MCTSSA working as one to integrate all these new systems into an enhanced warfighting capability.

The seven other MCSC/MCTSSA silver anniversary employees were all computer programmers or analysts when they joined MCTSSA. This fact shouldn't be a surprise because at the time MCTSSA was the Marine Corps focal point for maintenance of

tactical systems' software.

Of course, this was also the era when "the computer and mainframe" occupied an entire room; software was written and maintained in military languages; everyone was learning software configuration management; "desk top" computers were rare; and the notion of email had yet to take root. "It was interesting times," said Rick Konrad, a member of the MCTSSA quarter-century club. "We were just getting into communications and ground C2 [command and control] systems' structures, and we saw things changing hand in hand with the evolution of MCSC and technology."

Ian Finn, another 25-year employee and now a lead engineer for the Next Generation Enterprise Network, was one of the first of 12 MCTSSA employees to receive their Masters in Systems Engineering from the Naval Postgraduate School.

"Our jobs were focused entirely on software maintenance," he said. "Often times we sought to monitor a software's actual development at the vendor because we wanted to be familiar with its content when it was delivered."

While Finn and the others were writing and maintaining software at MCTSSA in 1994, in Quantico a former female Project Officer who left MCTSSA as a Major many years earlier had just taken command of MCSC. That former Project Officer was Major General Carol Mutter, the first woman in the Marine Corps to be promoted to that grade. The following year, according to Finn, MCTSSA changed profoundly.

"We fundamentally changed direction from an organization of software maintenance and program writing to a test and evaluation organization supporting systems, the program offices and providing field support."

What hasn't changed, according to Konard,

The eight Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity Civilian Marines celebrating 25 years with Marine Corps Systems Command include (from left) Philip Crosswait, Juanita McGraw, Rick Konrad, Thom Perfetto, Della Vincent, Ian Finn, Nia VanderVelde and (not shown) Marette DeJong. (Photo by Wil Williams)

is that "Marines are still going off to war, and we're still providing them with the support they need."

Today, MCTSSA has evolved into the home for a highly technical military and civilian work force, encompassing some of the most highly educated, technically and operationally qualified personnel in the Corps.

"It's interesting," said Vincent, who now works in MCTSSA's Civilian Manpower and Resources Group. "What we're doing and the technologies we use have changed extensively, but MCTSSA's appearance really hasn't. We don't have as many trailers; we have a few new buildings, but this facility looks much like it did in the 1980s."

Juanita McGraw, a silver anniversary employee who is now a Ground Test Team Lead, had a simpler view: "It's home."

—By Wil Williams, MCTSSA Public Affairs Officer

Notwithstanding the addition of numerous trailers dispersed around the compound to accommodate the inherent delays in military construction, the Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity's (MCTSSA) physical footprint has not changed dramatically over the last quarter century. Not long after this 1980s era picture was taken, MCTSSA's mission changed to post-deployment software support as it also became the Marine Corps Systems Command's focal point for test and evaluation. (MCTSSA photo)



At the time Della Vincent joined the Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity (MCTSSA), the custom was to take a Polaroid (far left) snapshot of each new civilian employee and post it on a hall display located in the headquarters building. This October, MCTSSA's Commanding Officer Colonel Christopher Snyder presented Vincent with a Federal Length of Service Award, recognizing her 40 years of civilian government service of which more than 25 have been at MCTSSA. (MCTSSA photos)

Command's acquisition process encompasses 25 years of change

Over the past 25 years the process Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC) uses to acquire weapons, vehicles, systems, gear and equipment has evolved.

"The acquisition process has been ever changing on a daily basis, from the hip-pocket process to the full stream line of documents," said Stephen Benjamin of Marine Corps Systems Command's (MCSC) Security Office. Benjamin has been with the Command since its inception as the Marine Corps Research, Development and Acquisition Command (MCRDAC).

According to Sharon Mazza, MCSC's Financial Management Competency Manager and also a 25-year Command veteran, it took a lot of training to get out of the "hip-pocket" mode.

"The acquisition process began with training requirements placed on personnel," she said. "As with any change, some individuals welcomed the emphasis on acquisition training and the increased program oversight, even though responsibilities also increased. The acquisition process was new and challenging at times but has since become a more streamlined process with documented policy and guidance."

Joanne Martin of Combat Support Systems, another 25-year Command employee, agrees.

"The acquisition process has really changed," she said. "When I first started, it was mostly between the program office and the contract office. Then came a lot of required input from others and lots of documentation. After that there was 'Acquisition Streamlining.' The amount of documentation was really reduced."

Lieutenant General Robert Tiebout (retired), MCRDAC and MCSC Commander from June 1991 to June 1992, believes the original consolidation of the Command at Quantico made the acquisition process more functional.

"There is better training now for the Program Managers," he said, "and the active-duty Program Managers have a recognized MOS [Military Occupational

Specialty] for career development."

According to Kelly Gibson, former Assistant Commander for Life Cycle Logistics who is currently attending the two-year Defense Senior Leadership Development Program before returning to Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC), because operations such as the Global War on Terrorism were not prevalent back in 1987, the urgency of fielding equipment to the warfighter was not as pressing.

"The acquisition process has been expedited to support the requirements of the operational contingencies of today's fight," said Gibson, who has been with the Command since the standing up of MCRDAC. "The acquisition process has gone through many updates in the last 25 years."

One example she pointed to is the Universal Urgent Needs Statement (UUNS). Major General William Catto (retired), MCSC Commanding General (CG) from July 2002 to June 2006, supports her example.

"The origination of the UUNS took place in the early stages of the war," he said. "This allowed Marines to request specific equipment support and receive an immediate response from MCSC. The establishment of the UUNS allowed for immediate support of our Marines in Iraq and matured into a concept used throughout the Department of Defense."

UUNS is just one part of the acquisition process that Catto believes worked well while he was in charge.

"The Systems Command of 2002 was specifically configured as a matrixed



Two members of the Command's quarter century club, George Gibbs (left) of Systems Engineering, Interoperability, Architectures and Technology and Stephen Benjamin of Security, reminisce about the acquisition process. (Photo by Bill Johnson-Miles)

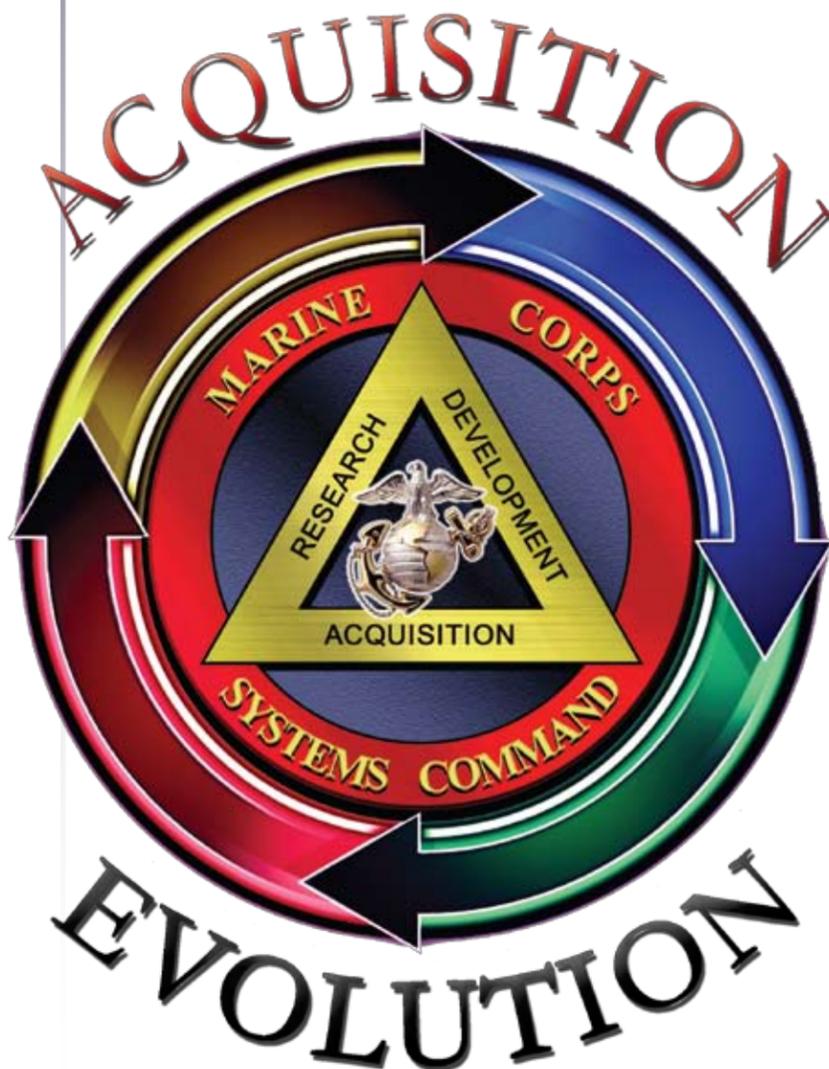
organization with contracts, finance and legal all supporting product groups, which were functionally organized," the former CG stated. "This allowed for movement of expertise as needed throughout the Command as required based on the workload."

George Gibbs of Systems Engineering, Interoperability, Architectures and Technology, has served under every CG and Commander at MCSC and MCRDAC, including the Command's very first CG, Major General Ray Franklin (retired), from November 1987 to October 1989.

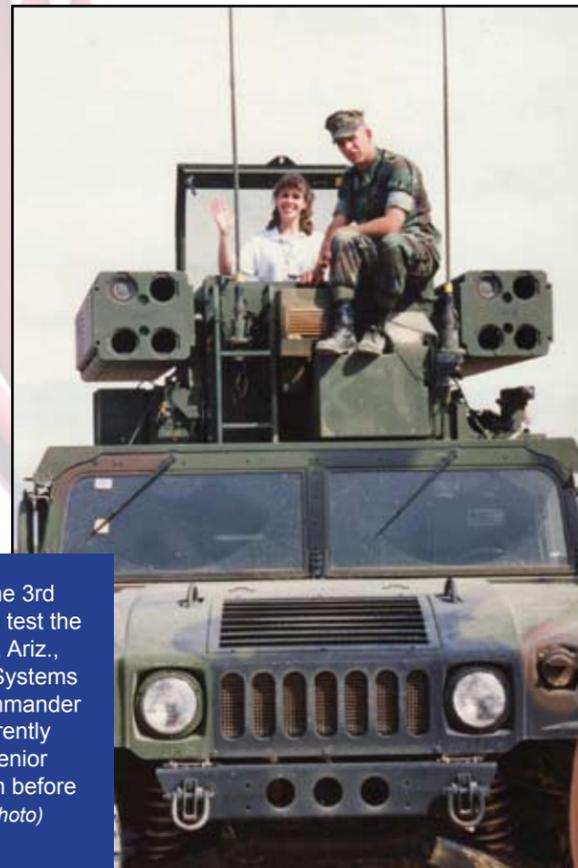
"Major General Franklin did a briefing to industry entitled 'Be No,'" Gibbs remembered. "The short version: We in the acquisition business do the best we can all the time, and occasionally something goes awry. When that happens, the first thing to occur is a new rule that says there will 'Be No' more of that. To be certain that there will 'Be No' more of that, we add steps and people to the process. We also change the rules and establish monitoring agencies to be sure that there will 'Be No' more of that."

Going with Franklin's "Be-No" theory, it is the Command's acquisition process will continue to change and evolve.

— By Bill Johnson-Miles, MCSC Corporate Communications



Kelly Gibson and a Marine from the 3rd Low Altitude Air Defense Battalion test the Avenger weapon system in Yuma, Ariz., in 1994. Gibson is Marine Corps Systems Command's former Assistant Commander for Life Cycle Logistics who is currently attending the two-year Defense Senior Leadership Development Program before returning to MCSC. (Kelly Gibson photo)





SILVER ANNIVERSARY

25 Years of Acquisition Excellence

“Through their excellence over the last 25 years in the acquisition and sustainment of the systems and equipment for the warfighting mission, this Command enables the Marine Corps to continue to be the most capable expeditionary fighting force in the world.”

— Mr. Sean J. Stackley
Assistant Secretary of the Navy
Research, Development & Acquisition

Happy Anniversary