

Progress on Commandant's Planning Guidance - Lightening the MAGTF

Background

- Priority No. 2 from the Commandant's Planning Guidance is to "rebalance our Corps, posture it for the future and aggressively experiment with and implement new capabilities and organizations."
- Two key tenants of Priority 2 are (1) reduce the size and weight of Marine Expeditionary Units and Marine Expeditionary Brigades so that they fit within likely lift constraints; and (2) establish an Expeditionary Equipment Oversight Board that provides final approval and oversight of all new equipment proposals, viewing them through an "expeditionary footprint and lighten the load" lens.
- In recent congressional testimony addressing the Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF), the Commandant stated, "Over the past decade, we have become more reliant on equipment sets resulting from the emergence of new threats, perhaps most notably the improvised explosive device. This trend has resulted in the acquisition of some resources that are incompatible with the ethos of an agile, expeditionary force. To that end, we have begun an effort known as 'Lightening the MAGTF,' a measure aimed at reducing the size, weight and energy expenditure of our forces from the individual rifleman to wholesale components of the MAGTF." (*General Amos, March 1, 2011, House Armed Services Committee Posture Statement*)

Discussion

- Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC) and Program Executive Officer Land Systems (PEO LS) have been working closely with the Deputy Commandant, Combat Development and Integration (CD&I) to develop an enduring process that critically evaluates system requirements for impact on equipment weight and size.
- In conjunction with CD&I, we are developing a methodology that establishes a quantifiable, analytic baseline to evaluate potential "Lightening the MAGTF" initiatives such as Expeditionary Energy Office, Equipment Design and Technology, Requirements Definition, Reduced Acquisition Objective, Table of Equipment Reduction and Equipment Sets, and Concept of Operations; this approach gives the ability to attain some results quickly, while leveraging the advantages of a deliberate, long-term analytical process to achieve a capable, middleweight MAGTF.
- Close coordination between the requirements and acquisition community is the key to achieve maximum capability within affordability constraints.
- The MAGTF gained significant weight and size over the past 10 years. It will take time to appreciably reverse this trend, and every opportunity should be pursued.

Key Messages

- The Commandant's priorities are our priorities.
- Seek every opportunity to reduce weight and size of our equipment.
- Execute solutions to gaps in capabilities and capacities via "commission" rather than "omission."
 - Understand the impacts and challenge weight driving requirements
 - Make explicit decisions
 - Understand how initiatives/decisions impact expeditionary capabilities
- Lighten the load will reduce the energy footprint in the expeditionary environment.

Facts & Figures

- Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacement trailer redesign resulted in a 10 percent weight reduction and 50 percent payload increase.
- Lightweight Mortars will replace the current 60mm and 81mm systems with new weapons made of aircraft steel, reducing weight by 18 percent and 8 percent, respectively.
- Infantry Automatic Rifle (IAR) will replace the automatic rifle within the Marine Rifle Squad, providing a 60 percent reduction of full system weight over the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon.