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STATEMENT OF  
MAJOR GENERAL DENNIS J. HEJLIK, U.S. MARINE CORPS  
COMMANDER  
U.S. MARINE CORPS FORCES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND  
BEFORE THE  
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
ON TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS, AND CAPABILITIES  
JANUARY 31, 2007

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STATEMENT OF  
MAJOR GENERAL DENNIS J. HEJLIK  
COMMANDER  
U.S. MARINE CORPS FORCES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

Mr. Chairman, Congressman Thornberry, and distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the current manning, equipping, and readiness challenges facing the United States Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC). On behalf of the Marines, Sailors, and Department of Defense Civil Servants of MARSOC, and their family members, I want to express our gratitude. With your support, MARSOC has gone from an operational concept to a forward deployed capability consisting of a special operations company and foreign advisor teams combating our nation's adversaries in the Global War on Terror.

Quadrennial Defense Review 2005 mandated that US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) "establish a MARSOC composed of 2600 Marines and Navy personnel to train foreign military units and conduct direct action and special reconnaissance." MARSOC is currently progressing on schedule with the build plan for personnel and equipment agreed to by USSOCOM and USMC and is due to reach full operational capability by the end of September 2008.

MARSOC is authorized 2289 Marines, 191 Navy, and 33 civilian personnel for a total of 2513 personnel. MARSOC has a current strength of 1285 Marines, 70 Navy, 2 civilian for a total of 1357 personnel (53.9% of authorized end strength). Officer manning will be complete during FY07. However, MARSOC will receive some personnel later than September 2008 - 27 Marines in FY09 and 18 Marines in FY10. These high-

demand low-density specialties are limited by throughput at formal schools. These specialties are almost entirely intelligence Marines and special communications Marines. Navy corpsman billets are all fully funded through the build plan, but throughput may prove challenging at their required specialized schools because Navy input numbers have to be higher than historical norms to meet MARSOC and increased NAVSPECWARCOM needs.

MARSOC currently does not have equipment shortfalls that have not been addressed by the scheduled build plan.

MARSOC currently recruits, screens, assesses, and selects in service. MARSOC does not direct recruit; it is dependent on the USMC and USN for mature personnel well into their first 5-10 years of service. MARSOC selection standards are set by conducting mission analysis on assigned special operations forces core tasks, developing mission essential task lists, determining what skills are required by Marines and Sailors to complete those, and then determining what attributes a Marine or Sailor needs to have coming into MARSOC.

The attributes MARSOC is looking for are those that enable the candidate to accept the greater responsibility of conducting special operations missions independent from large formations to a unique set of conditions and standards. MARSOC has identified applied intelligence, leadership (to include judgment, maturity, and cultural aptitude), and physical ability (including both determination and fitness) as selection criteria. MARSOC will not sacrifice quality for quantity in this process.

The Marine Special Operations School recruits, screens, assesses and selects Marines for MARSOC. To date, MARSOC conducted a pilot course in 2006 and will

have a fully functional process by May 2007. This process will recruit and screen all MARSOC Marines and Sailors, and assess and select all specialties required of operational billets at the Marine Special Operations Battalions, the Foreign Military Training Unit, and the Marine Special Operations School. Assessment and Selection will be a two week evaluation period to determine if a candidate for MARSOC has the attributes required to complete training and conduct special operations missions. There are mental and problem solving elements, physical elements, and team events over two weeks at an off-site location that give the Assessment Cadre an overall pattern of performance to match with screening data and empirical data from a Marine's career to determine if he has the right skill sets required to perform MARSOC core tasks.

MARSOC Marines receive specialized training in accordance with their assigned special operations core tasks. We have worked closely with US Army Special Operations Command Special Forces soldiers and US Navy Special Warfare Command SEALs to ensure that MARSOC Marines and Sailors have skills that are fully integrated and interoperable on the battlefield.

Foreign Military Training Unit Marines train in combat advisor techniques, language and culture, and mission specific skill sets depending on the requirements of the host nation. Foreign Military Training Unit Marines are also required to be duty experts in infantry skills, combat medicine, and advanced communications because they are often working in small teams independent from friendly forces and in some cases may be the only US military forces in a foreign country.

Marine Special Operations Battalion Marines train in special reconnaissance, sniper skills, specialized insertion and extraction (including helicopter operations open

and closed circuit diving, and the full spectrum of airborne operations from static line to Military Free Fall operations), close quarters battle, precision marksmanship, and coordinated reconnaissance and direct action mission profiles. These skills are trained to a unique set of special operations conditions and standards.

MARSOC plans to have a “closed loop” for its personnel. MARSOC is currently working with Headquarters, Marine Corps (HQMC) as well as USSOCOM to design the “closed loop” while minimizing the impacts on the careers of the Marines and Sailors transitioning from a conventional to a special operations manpower model.

We at MARSOC consider it a privilege to represent the United States Marine Corps within the Special Operations Command and are proud to be contributing to the Global War on Terrorism and assisting in meeting our national security goals. We look forward to working closely with the members of this committee as we continue to develop, evaluate, and refine the most effective means of manning, equipping, and maintaining the readiness of MARSOC in order to lay the foundation for continued success.