

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL
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ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**STATEMENT OF
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BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS
OF THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
ON
HISTORIC PROPERTIES
8 MARCH 2006**

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Chairman Hefley, Congressman Ortiz, distinguished members of the Subcommittee, it is my pleasure to appear before you today. I am Brigadier General James Flock, Assistant Deputy Commandant for Installations and Logistics, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps. I appreciate this opportunity to appear before you today. I am particularly pleased that you have chosen to focus on the management of historic buildings by the military services. The Marine Corps has a moral responsibility to care for the historic buildings entrusted to it by the American people. Many of these buildings are national icons. To Marines, many of these structures are tangible reminders of our past. They provide an anchor to today's Marine by reminding us of the sacrifices and accomplishments of those that have gone before us. In short, they inspire us to continue to strive to be the best. To many Americans, these structures represent some of the noble ideals upon which our republic was founded: honor, courage and commitment. They are touchstones that bind all Americans to a common heritage. We are proud to be the stewards of these resources. However, they pose a management challenge.

Though we are a small military service in terms of the number of installations we manage, these installations support about 7,400 buildings over 50 years old. Of these, 347 are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including 7 buildings containing 7 units of family housing. Another 398 are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, including 85 buildings containing 85 units of family housing. We currently have a total of 6 general officer quarters listed on the National Register and 3 eligible for listing on the National Register. Four of the listed general officer quarters are at our Marine Barracks at 8th & I – including the Home of the Commandants. The Marine Corps has privatized 10 historic general officer housing units at Marine Corps Base Quantico and one historic general officer housing

unit at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego via our Public Private Venture program for family housing. Our housing provider partners, with concurrence from State Historic Preservation Offices, have demolished and replaced 5 of these units and renovated 3 of these units. Renovation of one more unit is underway, demolition and replacement of another unit is planned. Agreements between the housing providers, military installations and State Historic Preservation Offices governing the maintenance of retained historic houses were executed to ensure maintenance of the historic fabric of retained historic structures. While privatization of these houses occurred recently, we believe the safeguards we created with our partners are sufficient to ensure continuation of their historic integrity. The remaining five historic flag quarters still owned by the Marine Corps are at our Marine Corps Bases Camp Pendleton and Hawaii, Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, and Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island. Efforts are underway to privatize three of these units; another unit is being studied for adaptive reuse for non-family housing purposes.

About 7,150 of our buildings will turn 50 years old during the next 10 years. We are developing plans to demolish many of these buildings and replace them with new construction through a variety of means, including public/private ventures. For example, our family housing demolition/replacement program, which we have begun, will ultimately result in the demolition and replacement of most of the 11,500 family housing units constructed during the Wherry and Capehart era that were to reach 50 years of age between 2001 and 2012. Less than 400 of these units will remain as government-owned housing and about 3,700 units will remain as retained privatized housing; the rest are being replaced with new housing or being demolished as excess to our needs. As we continue to develop our plans for facility modernization, we will consider

whether structures to be renovated or demolished may possess historic significance or unique architectural features which may make them eligible for listing on the National Register, and consult on them as required by law. We do not believe that many will be eligible.

Pursuant to the Base Closure and Realignment Act, the Marine Corps closed and is disposing Marine Corps Air Stations Tustin and El Toro. Both installations had structures that were on the National Register, or were determined eligible for listing on the National Register. Agreements with the California State Historic Preservation Office governing these resources were executed. Local Reuse Authorities were initially retaining two historic hangars at Tustin; the hangars were constructed in the 1920's to support lighter-than-air ship operations. Transfer of one hangar to Orange County is being pursued. Orange County recently obtained concurrence from the California State Historic Preservation Office to remove the historic status from the structure. Orange County is weighing its reuse options and it is unclear what the final disposition of the structure will be. The second hangar has been transferred to the City of Tustin and is now part of a City park. All other historic structures have been, or are in the process of being demolished. The negotiation process between the State, Local Reuse Authorities and Marine Corps was lengthy, but the end result was beneficial for all.

The U.S. General Accounting Office examined our data on historic structures in April 2001. They noted that Marine Corps historic building inventory data were inconsistent and they provided recommendations to correct the situation. The Marine Corps concurred in this finding and began to revise our inventory procedures. In partnership with the Navy, the Marine Corps reviewed property records for all its structures and incorporated historic resources information.

This review is complete and information presented in this testimony is based on our inventory data.

Some of our buildings that have been placed on the National Register, or have been determined eligible for listing, have been demolished as they could not be rehabilitated to meet today's requirements. For instance, 58 of the family housing dwellings of the 210 buildings that were on the National Register at our base at Quantico will be demolished or relocated to other sites in order for suitable replacement housing to be built. These houses, which were erected in the early 1950's, represented the largest concentration of Lustron housing in America. Lustron houses are prefabricated structures consisting of enameled steel plates over steel framing. Essentially these houses were erected on concrete pads by bolting together their parts. By the very nature of their construction, these 900 square foot two-bedroom, one-bathroom houses cannot be modified without destroying their structural integrity. The only way to provide suitable housing is to demolish these structures and build new on their sites. As these structures were on the National Register, we consulted with the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office and with the President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. The Marine Corps, as a result of this consultation, prepared documentation that meets archival standards that described the structures and their place in the infrastructure of the base. We also agreed to make the structures available to anyone that wanted them for relocation to other sites. These units are currently being offered for free to those individuals able to cover the cost of dismantling and relocating the homes. This offer will not delay or increase costs of the housing replacement privatization project. As we continue to modernize our infrastructure, we will continue to evaluate whether historic structures can be adaptively reused or whether they need to be

demolished. As the custodian of these national assets, we will endeavor to adaptively reuse historic structures when we can. However, as the example at Quantico illustrates, we may not be able to do so and, after consultation with a State Historic Preservation Office, may have to demolish historic structures in order to pursue necessary facilities modernization.

Maintenance needs for old buildings are similar regardless of their historic status. The need to repair utilities, roofing and windows does not change just because a building is historic. Due to funding constraints, decisions on building restoration are often driven by a building's use and condition, rather than its historic status. Until recent years, we have not had an effective method of estimating Sustainment costs for our facilities. We are now funded at 93 percent of the Sustainment requirement of our buildings, which allows us to hold them in their current condition. Unfortunately, these buildings are old enough to have been maintained in years when funding was scarce. Maintenance items, such as roof inspection and repair that should have protected a building as preventive maintenance, frequently were deferred. In many cases this resulted in older facilities being in a lower state of repair. Clearly past funding decisions have had detrimental impacts on some of our most treasured buildings. To correct this situation with regard to historic general officer quarters, we implemented a Modernization, Repair, and Improvement Program.

In 1994 the Marine Corps conducted detailed surveys of seven of its historic General Officer quarters to identify major deficiencies in the buildings. We developed a long-term plan to repair these facilities with limited disruption to the occupants and minimal financial impact on the remainder of the family housing program. Work under our modernization plan began in

1996 with revitalization of the Commanding General's quarters at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island. We have now renovated five of the units through the traditional military construction process, another home will be renovated as part of a privatization project, and the last one is under study for adaptive reuse for non-family housing use. Completion of our modernization program has ensured that our retained historic general officer quarters will be structurally and mechanically sound.

Though we do not track maintenance costs for historic structures, except for general officer quarters, we have anecdotal evidence that maintenance costs of historic buildings on a per-structure basis are greater than old buildings that are not historic. This is especially true with general officer quarters when compared to other family housing dwellings. The difference can be attributed to size. Large buildings with unique architectural features tend to have more historic significance than comparable old buildings that are smaller and do not have unique features. In particular, the size of our historic general officer quarters contributes significantly to the large difference in per-structure maintenance cost. The average size of our historic general officer quarters is almost 7,200 square feet. The average size of our non-historic general officer quarters is less than 2,900 square feet.

Some of our very old buildings also have unique architectural features that appear to result in increased maintenance costs. For example, some of our general officer quarters have slate roofs and copper flashing. A slate roof will last about 100 years as compared to an asphalt shingle roof that will last about 20 years. Of the two, clearly a slate roof is more expensive to install and maintain in the year of procurement. However, when compared to an asphalt shingle

roof, the life-cycle costs are similar or less. For buildings we intend to keep, the ability to use the materials with the lowest life-cycle cost clearly makes financial sense.

Like all the military services, we too have a backlog of maintenance requirements for all our buildings, new and old. We are working hard to reduce this backlog. While we have implemented methods of programming adequate funding for facilities Sustainment, which keeps our facilities from getting worse, our requirements continue to outstrip our funding related to restoration and modernization, which would return these facilities to a desired condition. We continue to pursue new and innovative approaches to lessen the burden these structures place on our limited resources.

In partnership with State Historic Preservation Officers, we are developing programmatic agreements that will govern our future treatment of historic properties. We are also preparing Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plans at our installations so that we may better manage the historic resources entrusted to us. These plans outline installation requirements to manage historic resources and provide a framework for an installation and State Historic Preservation Officer to work toward mutual historic preservation goals.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the Committee for its interest and support in our management of historic buildings. We take our stewardship of these resources very seriously. Many of these resources are National icons. We view their protection as a moral imperative. There is no question that maintenance of historic buildings on a structural basis

appears to be more costly than buildings that are not historic. However, it appears that the life-cycle cost of historic buildings is similar to non-historic structures.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.