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**Lieutenant General Jon Davis,
Deputy Commandant, Aviation, HQ Marine Corps**

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Lt. Gen. Davis: -- The good news, we actually executed what we said we were going to do last year as part of the readiness recovery model, and our procurement model, and building a Marine Corps for the future.

Things we'll talk about today. We'll talk about, you know, primarily my job is about readiness, making sure we've got the current readiness we need, the future readiness we need, and also talk to you about kind of what we're doing to innovate, getting ourselves ready, making sure we have a Marine Corps that's ready to meet the challenges of winning our nation's battles.

The aviation plan does that for the Marine Corps and it's tied into how we do everything else that the Marine Corps is involved with. It's firmly integrated with our combat capabilities department and what we do.

So last year, some of the things we talked, we worked on, is again, the current readiness initiatives, future readiness stuff. But operationally what we did is we deactivated one of our Prowler squadrons last year. We stood up VMFA-211 which is our second operational F-35 squadron in Yuma, Arizona. We've relocated a V-22 squadron at Kaneohe Bay. The first of two VMM's that will be going to Kaneohe Bay. That's VMM-268. Reactivated a reserve [HMLA] of Cobras and UH-[19's] unit in our reserve force.

The biggest and latest, of late, is we moved our first operational F-35 Bravo squadron to Japan. It's a squadron minus the first ten airplanes. The next six will roll in this summer in July. Kind of aligned with the amphibious carrier that will go in and be able to take those airplanes, move them around the Pacific if they need to deploy on a sea base. We'll talk about 121 [inaudible]. We're very proud of them. A lot of ways great.

Operationally, we've had our first RQ-21 deployments. One with the Marine Special Operations Command and also Marine Expeditionary [Training] Unit's getting ready to do another one here shortly.

The first employment of fixed wing advanced [precision] kill weapon system which is our laser rocket off of our Harriers. Very successfully, both in Libya and in Operation Inherent Resolve.

Continue fielding our Intrepid Tiger II [inaudible] which is our modular podded electronic warfare system for all of our platforms that deal with the distributed electronic warfare capability.

Continue to develop the V-22 air refueling system which will allow us to pass fuel in a missionized way to jets and to rotors and helicopters if need be from the V-22 Osprey. That's a big deal there.

We validated a Group 5 UAS requirement. This made it through the joint requirements process, to develop a sea-based Group 5 UAS. A multi-mission UAS.

And last, on the operational side, the [TH-3 Kilos] is approaching milestone [C] and everything on that program right now is on track [inaudible].

From the readiness perspective, we'll probably, one of the things you want to talk about is we've finished four of our independent readiness reviews and we're midway through our fifth. Harrier first, then CH-53, then V-22, then a ground mishap review which has [inaudible] impact on all of our readiness. Those are the small things that don't destroy an airplane but damage an airplane so it's not available for flight schedule. And then we're working on our V-22, our H-1 IRR [inaudible].

We'll talk about some of the initiatives that flowed from that CH-53 [inaudible]. The first three airplanes are out flying right now, and they're the highest reliability, highest readiness CH-53 Echoes in the fleet. Phenomenal performance. We're very very happy. Just like I predicted last year with you, that's bringing new life and reliability into the CH-53 Echo fleet which makes us highly confident we'll make our [inaudible] to 53 Kilos. So tried and true [inaudible], taking care of that better with a reset program and we're resetting each and every one of our 53 Echoes. Right now we have seven aircraft in reset on the East Coast at New River; seven on the West Coast at Miramar; and one in reset at Kaneohe Bay.

V-22 [inaudible] configuration. One of the things that flowed out of our V-22 [inaudible] review was the way we deployed the V-22 is right now it's our most operationally in demand airplane in the Department of Defense. I mean, we can't get enough of those. We can't train the crews, the maintainers fast enough, [inaudible] them fast enough to meet combatant commander demand. When we deployed that airplane right after declaring initial operating capability in 2007, we deployed them in combat to Iraq and then to Afghanistan. And also to all of our sea bases on our Marine Expeditionary Units. Plus now, two special purpose radar ground task forces.

We pushed the airplanes off the assembly line and modified them to meet the needs of the combatant commanders and the forces forward deployed. And what we ended up with is 77 different variants of the V-22 out there in the fleet. 77. That makes that hard to maintain readiness when you have 77 different parts with different maintenance threads, 77 different airplanes.

So one of the things that came out of our review which we are starting at the end of this year is what we call a common configuration reliability and maintainability initiative. We'll have [inaudible] come out through the first 129 airplanes that were the oldest V-22s, make them the same configuration as the latest V-22s. When our young Marines and Airmen as well go up to the V-22, it's the same configuration for each and every one of them, so that's going to help us do that. Same parts list, same consumable list. A lot of great stuff there.

The other thing we found in some of our readiness reviews was the importance of the Marine enlisted maintainers and their training and their certifications, standards by which they operate. So we took a play book out of something we had developed in the past which was out of the CO of our Fighter Weapons School in Yuma, Arizona, and we've been running this since 1978 to create operational capability in our pilots and our crew chiefs. They're trained at a very high standard, a very standardized way.

We thought in 1978 we would do the same thing with our enlisted maintainers. We did not. So we're actually redoing that now. We've already been through two of our test courses out there at Yuma, Arizona and will actually [execute] this class [inaudible] Advanced maintenance Officers Course for our senior enlisted and our aviation officers out there to get, share best practice, do things the best way. Much like the Air Force runs their ANOC course up at Nellis Air Force Base. Very aligned with the Air Force.

And also too, for our readiness model, what we were looking at for our Marine enlisted maintainers, making sure we had the right density of the maintainers in the squadrons and also with the right skill sets. We've never really tracked, we've tracked the Military Occupational Specialty of our enlisted maintainers, but never really tracked the Marine with the qualifications you'd assume like corporal, sergeant, staff sergeant, gunnery sergeant would have a certain qualification, but that's not the way we did that. So two and a half years ago, actually when we met last year it was in process but now it's in play right now, happening. The additional occupational specialties for our enlisted maintainers so we can track the folks' qualifications. As collateral duty inspectors or what they call [CQARs], multi-functional [CQARs] [inaudible] for flight will now be given an additional military specialty. It's real tracked. Our manpower system, if you can track it you can keep them. We'll talk about incentives, things like that, things we're looking at there with our enlisted maintainers, but a big deal.

And also too, part of those enlisted, those independent [inaudible] was do we have them in the right desk seat to meet the Marine Corps readiness requirements? We have a very different readiness model than many other services. Small in size, you know, a highly ready force.

I'll tell you, we did not have, when we did the analysis, we did not have the density of the Marines or the skills we needed to make our readiness goals. We reestablished our benchmarks. Our benchmarks for what is, what we call maintenance core competence, is actually a higher benchmark now than we have for our Navy squadrons because of our high readiness goals and our non-[inaudible] readiness status. Tracking those skills in our maintenance training stuff. So we'll have more standardization, more professionalism, really giving, these are the very best ranges we've ever had. Giving them the tools to be successful and aligned with supervision and [inaudible] I think is highly important.

We can talk about the independent readiness reviews. I'll tell you the things that have come out of them, the big things that will actually help us out. Let's focus on the last one we just did, and we'll open it up to some questions. But we had a spike, and the Marine Corps' not alone in that, a lot of other services had, but we're studying. We just finished that study. The ground mishap rates. That's towing an airplane into something or closing a canopy on something, or sucking head gear down an intake. You call it a maintenance error, but on average, those maintenance errors, we've doubled the numbers, doubled the rate over the last few years in the United States Marine Corps. [Inaudible] what's going on there. Studied that. I'll tell you that each and every one of those, on average, those ground mishaps take an airplane off the flight schedule for 43 days.

Now if you think about it, you've got really busy Marines working really hard to fix things. Right? So are they, if they are fixing it on goal like a taxi mishap or changing in an engine that we've sucked a head gear down an intake or closed a canopy on a screwdriver, right? That's what I consider to be negative maintenance. We're fixing [inaudible]. We're not doing proactive, positive maintenance, we're fixing something that we didn't need to fix before that day started. It takes airplanes off the flight schedule. So focusing on it but we've got to do that better.

We have done, because of the nature of the fight we've been in for the last 15 years, we have always tried to make sure that we were pushing the newest airplanes to go forward deploy with our next deployed units. You think about, we've done about 650 V-22 aircraft transfers since 2010. That saves about 500 hours for each unit. The ascending unit and the receiving unit will do 500 hours of maintenance for a transfer inspection. We do a lot inside the Department of the Navy with F-18s. We do it with, but V-22s is the one I'm going to be focused on. That's 650 transfers. You look at the maintenance man hours spent towards doing that, we could be fixing an airplane, maintaining an airplane, doing technical training. Instead we were doing a transfer.

So the policy's in place right now. We're working on how do we minimize the number of aircraft transfers. And frankly, what that will come to be is a set configuration for each unit out there with the kinds of airplanes you're going to have. A mix of MV-22 C's and D's, that they will own those airplanes. We now, more and more, we decided about a year ago that we weren't going to do an aircraft transfer of the V-22's. We would actually fly those airplanes across the Atlantic. We're just getting ready to fly some

down to Guam from Hawaii for deployment, instead of putting them on a ship or transferring them. We're going to air deploy them on tankers. Basically the unit will take the airplanes over and bring them back, just like we do with our jet aircraft. So minimizing the number of transfers will help out a lot as well.

The other thing I'll tell you, inside the Department of the Navy each and every one of our readiness reviews has said we have here [a deficiency] in the amount of spare parts we have, for every one of our type model series aircraft. If you're trying to make a flight schedule and you don't have a part, where do you get that part? Off another airplane, right? So that's called cannibalization. That's negative maintenance as well. So that's draining our Marines' ability to go do a job. They're doing maintenance really three times. They still have to go put that part back on another airplane.

So attacking those three things will allow for more airplanes on the flight line. So I'll tell you, we're doing a little bit better on our readiness recovery model. We put about another, I can give you exactly the number of airplanes back on the line. We are, this last year we predicted we'd be up 43 aircraft. That was our plan, I think I briefed you, that was our projection for this year that we met last year. We made 44. So we're net one from what our projections on our readiness recovery model. This year we project we'll be an additional 33 airplanes if we do things the way we're supposed to, and we basically stay on track with the plan that we have for the readiness recovery model. So we anticipate we'll do that if not better. And that also factors in, accounts for even the losses we had out there the end of the year last year.

Since we've started the readiness recovery process we've put about another, I'd say about another 80 airplanes back on the flight schedule that wouldn't have been on the flight schedule before. So returning them back to the flight line. We are on track to make our ready basic aircraft goal in the third quarter of 2019, and all of our operational formations in 2022.

That's all I've got to say. I'll open it up to your questions.

DWG: Why not begin with a quick one about the review of Secretary Mattis [inaudible]. Look at the cost and suitability for an upgraded Super Hornet to serve as a replacement for F-35s. First off, what is the Marine Corps' role going to be in that study? And secondly, what has your experience been in terms of how Super Hornets could or could not constitute [inaudible]?

Lt. Gen. Davis: I will tell you first off, our role. We're a fleet of mainly F-35Bs -- 353 F-35s, 67 F-35Cs. Four squadrons. I already own six -- I actually bought ten F-35Cs, six of which are on the flight line down there at the training squadron right now. So we'll operate four squadrons integrated with the Navy carrier squadron. If they're not integrated with the Navy carrier squadron, just like our F-18s, they'll go to unit deployments or operational taskings when they're not assigned to a carrier. So that's the Marine Corps' stake in this.

So we are involved in this review. Involved [inaudible] my team. I have probably got the most experienced F-35 pilots in the Department of the Navy on my staff right now. We've got a major, he's got five years' experience as an instructor pilot; weapons instructor; now on the staff. So he brings added insight to what the advantage of the 5th generation airplane is. So we'll study that, apples to apples. Really what it is is looking at across the mission sets, does a Super Hornet, Block 3 Super Hornet, match up or compare to an F-35C. So it is F-35C, not A's, not B's. It's only for the Navy carrier air wing of the future.

I don't want to get into all the details, but I think it will be a good study and my sense is we'll probably end up validating the imperative we have with 5th generation aircraft out there that [inaudible] our nation's [inaudible]. That's my sense, but we'll have an apples to apples comparison. We'll let Boeing and Lockheed basically make their case for what they think they can do. It's something [inaudible] aspirational [inaudible]. I'm highly confident we're on the right track. We'll let the facts [rest] as they are. So again, it's just the F-35C. So my stake in that is four squadrons or airplanes. Again, I've already bought 15 or 16 percent of the airplanes I'm supposed to buy of F-35C.

DWG: General, Jeff [Sheldon], Marine Corps Times.

I'm interested in the manning levels for marine aviation. So when you look at your manning documents or your staffing goals and the current inventories, which platforms are you short of pilots [inaudible]?

Lt. Gen. Davis: Right now we are, the numbers we're supposed to have for maintainers and pilots, but what we have is I would say like in the F-18 community we have more majors than --- we're under-subscribed in captains, company grade officers. We have more majors and lieutenant colonels. But that's covering for that. So the majors and lieutenant colonels are there, but they're aging, they're moving on. I'm shy on the captain side of the house so I'm watching that very carefully in F-18s. On F-35s, they have a very small community, so anybody that does decide to go out and go to the airlines, I mean that's a big impact on us. V-22, with the aviators and the maintainers, they've been a stressed community from the beginning. And maybe the Harrier as well. But watching that very carefully.

Right now, though, the manpower system will tell you we have the people we need. We also look to what the demand signal is from the airlines for hiring our folks out there. So we're watching that very carefully as a Marine Corps, developing courses of action for General Miller to try to stay out in front of that.

But everybody knows we're buying some great machines and these are really cool airplanes that we operate. But the most important part of the airplane is the Marines that operate it and maintain it.

DWG: Just to follow up, since you have mostly majors and lieutenant colonels in the F-18s, are they the pilots most at risk of being picked up by the airlines? Retiring and going --

Lt. Gen. Davis: They're nearing the end of their service commitment so they could be, yes. So they could be. But my number one job is to entice them to stay in like I did. It's a great, it's an incredible career. It's a great honor.

I think there are certainly easier places to go fly airplanes, but there's no more [inaudible] place to fly airplanes and maintain airplanes than the United States Marine Corps. It's a great mission and we're supporting our ground brothers, which is very very fulfilling. It's been almost 37 years for me, and I don't regret any single day. Bottom line is, they are highly capable folks. We have to watch our retention numbers. A lot of times when the airlines hire, it comes on very very quickly with not a lot of advance warning that someone's going to move on to the airlines. When we see what the airlines are doing as far as their hiring requirements, it's a daunting task for them to fill their cockpits as it is for us.

We talked about the readiness. It just takes time to build an experience aviator, experienced maintainer. Over the last two and a half years we not only understand how important it is to build experienced aviators, but experienced maintainers. Tracking them, maintaining them, giving them the tools they need to be successful. Then retaining them is really important to the Commandant, everybody in [inaudible].

DWG: Leigh.

DWG: When do you anticipate the [F-35C] redesign, and what steps are you all taking in the interim [inaudible] pilots?

Lt. Gen. Davis: Here's what we're seeing. What we've seen on the F-35C, I know that there is mitigations and redesigns in play right now. The first carrier deployment I think was in 2020, but we'll be taking the airplanes before that. We're not seeing any problems at all land-based on the F-35C. So again, the Marine Corps from the land-based perspective wouldn't have a problem with that. We do have to get it fixed to go aboard the carrier. I think we mainly saw that with light-weight catapult shots. I can get you a more detailed answer on that, but there's, it's a small problem, an incredible capability out there to get that airplane aboard the ship. We're seeing no problems with the [inaudible]. Anything like that would be [inaudible]. We'll get that fixed, it's not a big challenge to get those [inaudible].

DWG: Thanks, sir, for coming to see us.

I was hoping you could talk a little bit more about the 35's being sent to Japan. What are they doing now? What's their operations tempo? And once the six more come in July, what are their plans? Will they be involved in partner training? Any large-scale exercises? Anything like that?

Lt. Gen. Davis: That's really up to the combatant commanders, what they're going to do with those airplanes. I know that they're very excited to get those airplanes out there.

I think it changes a lot in the Pacific. The first 5th generation aircraft permanently based in the Pacific is the Marine F-35[B] squadron.

A couple of things on that. I'll tell you the mistakes made in deploying them. We sent them through Alaska on the way out there, so I'll tell you that our refueling model for the F-35, when we send them on the tankers is off. You know, you look at the models, how many times we have to send them to the tankers, it's way too many times. They're saying that we saw that. We went to [inaudible] Farnborough, and we saw it again going out there. So we're kind of, I pushed them up into Alaska in the wintertime on the way over there. We'd rather go through Hawaii and through Wake, but the model's off. We're redoing the model so we need a lot less air refueling than we're doing right now. But we go with what the Air Force tanker program tells us we have to do. We're kind of following them through that. But we don't need -- the airplane's got longer legs than an F-18 with drop tanks, so why are we going to the tankers so often? We don't need to do that. So we'll get that squared away.

The one thing I will tell you on that deployment, we've all seen new airplanes deploy places for the first time. A lot of times it's broken airplanes all the way across, you know, wherever they're going. Those airplanes were 100 percent up the entire way. The only thing we waited on was weather and the tankers out there. We've got, I think they were 70 or 80 percent readiness rate which is great for a unit out there. They're ready to go in Japan today. That's an exciting unit to be in, the first forward deployed in Iwakuni. The next six will go out, again, the pilots and the maintainers are being trained right now in Beaufort, South Carolina at the [MFAT] 501, our training squadron. They'll flow out, meet up with their airplanes and flow out to Japan this July. So that's on track. And BMFA 2011, our second operational squadron, is training right now to get ready to go on their Marine Expeditionary Unit. So we'll have two of those units at sea in 2018, unless operational taskings require them sooner than that.

In the aviation plan, based on some of our legacy F-18 readiness, we moved some F-18 squadrons to the left in the transition order. The MFA 122 is going to start transition a little bit early to the F-35B. They will move from Beaufort to Yuma, Arizona and stand up as an F-35B squadron. The MFA 314 is an F-35C squadron, the first Charlie squadron. They're going to start their transition here shortly and they'll be standing up in Miramar, California. The next one will be the MFA 225's, an F-18E squadron for transition to the F-35B in Miramar as well, the second Miramar squadron. We're already building, the MilCon, the military construction's going in to build the hangars out there for those squadrons. It's an exciting time to be there. We'll extend the life, the sundown of the [EMA 311, a Harrier squadron. A little bit longer to account for the F-18 squadrons moving.

The last year in the aviation plan we said we would do that, just to basically mitigate risk and make sure we had operational capability. The Harrier readiness review we did bought us a lot of extra confidence on the life and reliability out of the Harrier fleet. It's going well. The airplane is doing very well. Right now it's not throwing out what we want for the long term, but it's a great airplane for us right now to give us the capability

to [support] the laser rockets and putting a Link 16 in the airplane which is laid out in the air plan.

We'll extend the utility of that airplane out to 2026 when we expect to retire it.

DWG: Two quick follow-ups and then my question.

You said the F-35/18 review is only on the C. Is that Mattis' specification or --

Lt. Gen. Davis: No, that's Secretary Mattis'.

DWG: The other follow-up, you said you have the numbers you need in your aviation plan. [Inaudible] you're predicting 600 pilots short.

Lt. Gen. Davis: Well, it's hard to predict being short like that. We're very worried about retention full stop. We have gaps in certain rank structures. Like my F-18 captains are shy. My AV-8 captains are shy. F-35 captains are shy. We're starting to see a little bit of stress in the V-22 fleet, although we can get them through [inaudible]. Part of it's not just with the Marine Corps but how the Navy training system is producing the pilots we need. So loading the aviators that we need to make sure that we make our numbers.

I would say right now our numbers are okay, but I would say that we have to watch it very carefully and not just do historical data, but predictive data about where we are for retention. I am worried about it, the Commandant's worried about it.

We're developing courses of action for the Commandant to do things, help with retention.

I will tell you, the number one thing I can do to help with retention is to basically have readiness on the flight line so the pilots are flying more. Part of that goes back to stopping the small mistakes we make on the flight lines so there are more [up] airplanes.

The number one thing that we can do to help improve readiness on the flight line for the Marine Corps is to fix our spare parts problem. Across the Department of the Navy we do not have the spare parts. It's not just the Marine Corps, it's the Navy as well, to sustain our airplanes and maintain our readiness.

You think about our target, the notional target we'd be going after, being 10 percent non-mission capable fly rate. So there's non-mission capable maintenance, non-mission capable supply. Maintenance would be the maintainers fixing it. Supply would be spare parts. We are well north of that in most Marine platforms. A lot of Navy platforms too.

I'm challenging the 10 percent number. What airline plans on having not enough parts for 10 percent of its flying machines? Not very many. Probably my highest readiness squadron is HMX-1. It runs about a 94 percent mission, you know, full mission capable rate for our V-22 fleet. Their target, non-mission capable supply is 2 to 3 percent.

That's [inaudible]. That's how it allows them to get that great readiness platform. So we can do better.

DWG: My main question. The 15th MEU did a test out on the America, looking at the possible [inaudible] MEU. A couple of different combinations. Explain what you're looking for there. One thing, one of the mixes you put on there, you had more H-1s on there than Osprey. Given the fact that the Marine Corps is looking at more these deployment kinds of things, you know, with the distributed force in that plane. Why aren't you --

Lt. Gen. Davis: I saw the numbers out there. We're not putting more H-1s and Ospreys out there. I think it's still 12 Ospreys. I think we bumped up to 8 [ADH]. We are looking at the Marine Expeditionary Unit of the future does that require 8 F-35s, or does it require 6? You know, I think there's certainly a lot of data that would say let's go with 8. The America is a bigger ship, bigger fuel tanks, bigger MLA to put your Hornets down there. It has the ability to do that.

So I think we're looking at, on that just again notionally right now, would it make sense to put more CH-53E's? Because that ship does not have a well deck, for moving heavy gear ashore. A few more of the H-1s. One or two more of the H-53s. Eight AV-8s and the V-22s.

Hey, I think that's smart. We just went out there, we did what they call a light interior test after our operational test ready to float. We took out 12 F-35Bs ashore from the [inaudible] squadrons and operated out there for about three days. They had a great time. We took 12 because, I would have taken 16 to 20 but MFA 121 was getting ready to deploy to Japan and they're mailing dogs and people out there and families out to Japan, and like you're not going to turn these families upside down in order to go basically do a rebalance [inaudible] on the America.

So we went out there with 12. Phenomenal capability. It was easy day. They did great. We have a great capability on our hands. And I think you're going to see more of that from the Marine Corps. We'll mix and match the numbers of platforms on our decks and the operational demand. It's an exciting time being a Marine executive, exciting time being able to [inaudible] these platforms [inaudible], as well as F-35s [inaudible], and
F-35 [inaudible].

DWG: Good morning, General.

[Inaudible] asking about --

Lt. Gen. Davis: You asked me a question last year I couldn't answer. I tried. No deception, I --

DWG: As you know, President Trump signed [inaudible] before it was [inaudible]. Essentially asking the DoD to come up with a newer revised [inaudible], comprehensive

[inaudible]. Do you expect [inaudible] as a result of that? I mean Iraq and Syria [inaudible] other places.

And another [inaudible] even more important thing [inaudible], at least when [inaudible], a requirement to identify the importance to [inaudible].

Now given that the President, given that President Trump and President Putin spoke over the phone and according to [inaudible] right now, probably the main topic of their discussion was [inaudible] against everything, the potential to cooperate. How do you see this [inaudible] in the future? And the chance for [inaudible]?

Lt. Gen. Davis: I would say it would be presumptive of me to get out in front of a strategy review for countering a terrorist group like ISIS. But I think all of us want one. We should continue looking at the strategy to make sure it makes sense. And partner wherever you can. But I think that you talked about will airstrikes increase? I think you've got people [inaudible], a career military man. You know, air power by itself is not a strategy. So I think it's always an integrated strategy. It's not just military.

DWG: All [inaudible].

Lt. Gen. Davis: I don't, I think, I wouldn't want to get out in front of an analysis about to take place, so the bottom line is, I give you my opinion that I think air power alone is not a strategy. But I think we all welcome, you know, we should be conscious of what we need to do to do a better job.

DWG: Thank you.

DWG: General, on the DoD review that's focusing on readiness of the military, there's an expectation that everyone is going to want more money for everything, obviously, but from your side, from the DoD side, what are going to be your priorities? Sustainment, procurement? We talked about [inaudible]. How would you categorize some of the things that you will be recommending for the budget?

Lt. Gen. Davis: What's really interesting and good about this review is we've been on it and I've been talking to you about it for the last two and a half years, so small, I would say we, Marine Corps on the aviation side, have been working really hard and very very successfully for 15 years, and I'd have to say probably even before that. A lot of our [inaudible], certainly our tac [gear] platforms are some of the oldest in the DoD, certainly oldest in the Department of the Navy. So part of that is a, and it's the same as last year. The formula is, basically doing our level best at fixed [programs] which we are doing. Focusing on spare parts, focusing on enlisted maintainers, focusing on stopping the [inaudible], the small bumps out there, making sure people are flying if they're supposed to, and then recovering the readiness. And we are on track. We predicted 43 last year, we did 44. All right? I'd like to have done better, because if I didn't destroy some airplanes we would have done better. This year, we've projected 33 and I want to do better than that as well. But the old metal has to be replaced. So I would say there's an imperative to the Marine Corps to try to get out of the old and into the new as quick

as we can, and certainly on the attack [inaudible] side. I think we'll make our case for that, to do that. You can make a business case for you know, the, and I think the President was helping, putting a little pressure on our people that build our airplanes to come up with a better price. How could you do this cheaper? You know? I think we'll see what they come up with. But bottom line is we do need to recapitalize, and the sooner we can do that, the better. We'll take the new stuff as quick as we can, make sure we take care of the new stuff like we're supposed to, and also make sure we take care of the old stuff like we're supposed to. Sustaining that. Both human and machine.

DWG: You talked about the Osprey [inaudible]. Would you consider that to be [inaudible]?

Lt. Gen. Davis: We are looking at that, with the additional squadrons. If the Marine Corps goes up in size, then we would need some additional [enlisted maintenance]. It's our primary personnel carrier [inaudible]. Again, it's just great potential for all the things we can do, so right now we're very focused on completing the programs of record which we're supposed to have. The Navy is now getting some airplanes. We actually gave them 12 of ours and they'll pay us back with another 12 a little bit later, to get them going for their onboard, their carrier onboard delivery system. But also too, this thing called CC RAM, this kind of common configuration effort is really important. That is a funded effort right now, so we're going to do that. That's going to have, I think it will improve the [inaudible] for the V-22. It will also improve, give us a common configuration inside the airplane. In both the Air Force Special Operations Command and [inaudible] is very desirous to get that just as quickly as we can. Okay? They are in such high demand.

Great question, thank you.

DWG: Hope, then Christian, then Terra.

DWG: You mentioned the [inaudible] review and I wasn't clear on when that was happening or if it's already taking place, but I was hoping you could talk about the parameters of that review, how far back it reaches, what factors are being looked at, and what questions you think will be answered. Also, when it's expected to be completed.

Lt. Gen. Davis: It's complete.

DWG: It's complete, okay.

Lt. Gen. Davis: They went back, I think they went back over a five-year horizon to look. They looked at the data from the last two years in detail, but I think they looked at trends. And things they said. We've got a very young force, right? Lots of young Marines out there. [Key] Marines, highly intelligent Marines. They looked at kind of, they looked at the why. Using checklists, doing things by the book. It was making sure that like the support equipment was actually serviceable as it needed to be, and that the test equipment was good.

One of the things, one of the [outsize] things they said, the things you're doing that help them [inaudible] maintain airplanes like transfer inspections, is having an [outsize] impact on their ability to do the work they've got to do and they're working really hard. Lots of hours. But how do you best focus the hours of working, making those productive hours? A transfer inspection is not a productive hour. Then any time they do crunch something, right? That actually hurts their ability to go to technical training, better training. It validated some of the things we're working on that are now just coming into play which is codifying the skill sets of enlisted maintainers. We will not grow the size of the Marine maintenance department, but we will grow the requirement to have additional qualifications inside that maintenance department. So instead of having three collateral duty inspectors in one shop you might need four or five. So it's a great incentive to go find great young Marines and work them up and give them the tools. If they do decide to get out of the Marine Corps, then they're going to go back to our nation better trained and highly qualified folks going back out.

Really what it does is it puts an imperative on us respecting the human side of the equation, and also making sure that they have the tools they need. The support equipment. The spare parts. They're making mistakes in some cases because they're cannibalizing parts off one airplane to go make another one. You know? We're having them do what I call negative maintenance because we have not resourced them with the tools they need to be successful, if that makes sense.

It's almost an indirect assessment of what we need to do better, but I think it's going to have an outsized impact on stopping these things. Again, these were the ones, in those airplanes, if you were looking at some of the data we had, if you aggregated all the class C, the small stuff, the crunches, right? The maintenance problems. It was about 1,023. If you aggregated 1,023 days of flying an airplane, you did not have a [inaudible] in a given year for those. That's a lot. That's a lot of flight hours we're not generating. That's a lot of, when you think about all the hours that go into that to go fix that airplane that they didn't have to fix in the first place. So I think it's actually one of the more important ones we're going to do.

DWG: The airlift [inaudible], with the roll-up of all the reviews you're doing, has there been any independent effort to look at all the recent ones cumulatively for the trends? An independent effort to do that?

Lt. Gen. Davis: I will tell you, I look at them all, my team does. We're not seeing a [serial] failure component to those aviation mishaps. It's mainly human error. So how do you get a human error? It's standards, it's training, it's doing things by the book. From the formulation of the flight schedule to the sortie to the execution of the sortie to the debrief of the sortie.

And I'd also tell you that for a period of time, the last time we flew our flight hour goal for the United States Marine Corps was 2012. The last five years we've under-executed our flight hour goal. The pure reason for that is that we don't have enough airplanes on the flight line. It goes back to your question. What's your priority? I've got to get some new metal involved, so I've got to make sure that I'm [inaudible].

The only way to go faster, to get faster, to be able to execute our flight hour plan is to get new airplanes. I can only buy the parts fast enough to go get them back in [glide slope] and that's 2019. So I would say they're not flying enough. They're flying what we would consider they're safe. They're flying safe airplanes. They personally are safe. But their proficiency and experience in dealing with things that go wrong is not where it needs to be, and we're about three hours per pilot per month better than we were the last time I talked to you, but that's still not good enough. We're still about two hours shy of our target. So we're driving that back. But I'm surprised with the mishaps we had in October, because we were, the numbers were coming up. So reinforcing to commanding officers that you've got a group of aviators that have not flown as much as we did when we were growing up, and you just have to be more pedantic about how we structure the sorties, supervise the sorties, and we call it building the box [inaudible] out there.

DWG: Just a quick follow-up and then my main question on that. Am I reading this right, that your class A mishap rate is almost double last year's in the first quarter of the fiscal year?

Lt. Gen. Davis: No.

DWG: So you have a --

Lt. Gen. Davis: Oh, are you reading --

DWG: -- class A mishap rate of 7.63 right now?

Lt. Gen. Davis: I'm not seeing what you're -- is that something --

DWG: Naval Safety Center or whatever. And then last year, all of last year was 3.3 --

Lt. Gen. Davis: October was a bad month. So we started off with a number of mishaps in October so. We've seen that before. If I'm there at the end of the year and that rate stays, that's an unsustainable rate. That's not good. So we're, again, watching that. But I can't have a second, third, and fourth quarter like the first quarter. Yeah, so the number is a lot higher.

DWG: Okay.

Lt. Gen. Davis: But we've seen that before. But we usually use mishap data over the year, but October and November were bad months.

DWG: You made a comment earlier on the review that's coming up, and the President's comments about the F-35. And one of the things you said is, and I'm paraphrasing because my notes are terrible. I think the President, it was healthy for the President to see if they can build the planes cheaper, the F-35.

Lt. Gen. Davis: He put some pressure on Boeing both [inaudible] and Lockheed Martin for doing a better job getting a better price.

DWG: What about the flip side of that? What about putting pressure on the Marine Corps to buy cheaper platforms? To execute a counter-insurgency like drones, you know, light attack aircraft, that kind of thing.

Lt. Gen. Davis: Where are we going to fight next?

DWG: Where are we fighting now, I guess is the question.

Lt. Gen. Davis: No, where are we fighting next? So we don't know where we're going to go next. We're a force of readiness. So we are small, but configured to go fight across the spectrum. And frankly, what am I going to use for a low intensity conflict? I'm buying 380-something attack helicopters, [inaudible] that all have weapons. That's my low mix. So I'm buying them. I actually bought those first. Now I'm going to the high end fight. There are scenarios out there that the drones and the light airplanes will not survive. Will not. We're configured to go for the high end fight and the low end fight.

We will build a tilt rotor or some kind of a sea-baseable UAS that's got full fires capability, electronic warfare capability, that will be a replacement for you know, the attach helicopter. It gives me a longer range, longer strike capability in the late 2020's, 2030 time frame to replace our H-1 Zulu's. And future vertical lift will replace my Yankee helicopters, right? For my light lift out there.

So we've got programs in place to do all of that. What I don't have right now is my ability to fight the high end fight. My Hornets are rapidly coming out of relevancy. My Harriers are as well. The F-35 is our answer to that. So we don't know where we're going to fight, but we're going to be ready for the high end fight. If I have to take, you want to get a cheaper airplane. How about across the spectrum utilitarian airplane that does it all? The F-35 is the only airplane in the world that can go from guaranteed be able to get into a high threat environment much better than anything else. I can also, if the threat goes down I can load up pylons into that airplane. Load more [inaudible] I can carry [in] a fully loaded Super Hornet. Right? [Inaudible] 14,000 pounds of ordnance and go do what I've got to do. So bottom line, I can reconfigure that airplane on the ship if need be, or an expeditionary base.

We've got a great strategy to be ready for all the stuff. The United States Marine Corps is the nation's insurance policy. It's any [inaudible], any place, any time. We've got our low end airplanes. The low threat, the low portion of that which is very fine attack helicopters. The Zulu and the Yankee. And now we're building our high end. So good question.

DWG: One clarifying, then my main one.

When you said the flight hours now are about three hours up from where they were? Could you --

Lt. Gen. Davis: That's per pilot. Yeah.

DWG: Could you give us actually a number of about how many flight hours Hornet pilots are getting, V-22 pilots are getting?

Lt. Gen. Davis: I don't have that right now, but I can get that for you.

DWG: Okay. And then back to Hope's question on the class A mishaps, there were also a couple out of Okinawa in December. I was wondering if those reviews are complete or were there also human factors that were involved in those crashes?

Lt. Gen. Davis: Yes. Yes. They're still being investigated so I don't want to get in front of them, but there was nothing wrong with those airplanes.

DWG: Would there be any sort of resulting command review out of Okinawa to say you know, there wasn't enough training, or --

Lt. Gen. Davis: Actually, here's what I will tell you. They were qualified, they were proficient. They were actually, these were crews that had been flying a fair bit. Flying in some pretty challenging conditions. One was an air refueling [evolution], a V-22. And we'll let, we've got to run through the investigation and let them, I try really hard not to get out front in what happened on that one there. We had a, in Okinawa. So that was the V-22 mishap.

We had an F-18 mishap off of Japan. I don't know, we don't know, we've not even found the wreckage for that airplane. We have our beliefs, but we don't know if there's any, we don't believe there was anything wrong with that airplane, but we don't know.

DWG: At this point would it even be possible to find out since it's past the black box survivability?

Lt. Gen. Davis: Yeah, we have the evidence we have and we'll try to work something from that. Again, it's going to be more complex than others but I want to let that one play out and not prejudice that one at all.

And we had a Harrier mishap as well off Okinawa. We had a perfectly serviceable airplane that went into a spin during an air combat training exercise. It bothered me because I grew up flying Harriers. And it went into a spin. We don't know why it went into a spin. The airplane's supposed to be very spin-resistant. I've never spun a Harrier and I've got 3300 hours or something flying a Harrier. I've never spun one. But [inaudible] flying with a drop tank. So I've asked them when they do air combat training, not to fly drop tanks. And they're actually not even drop tanks. They're ferry tanks. They're big tanks. So they're out there. What I've done is a mitigation. Not that it's connected to that, but I said I'm going to ask them not to fly the drop tanks when they do those kind of profiles.

DWG: Thanks, sir, for being here.

You spoke a little bit earlier about relooking at the way you tank F-35s. So could you just give us a little more detail on that? Are you talking about Marine Corps tankers or Air Force tankers?

Lt. Gen. Davis: We're looking at specifically the F-35B, probably the F-35C models as well. We haven't done many transatlantic or transpacific tanking of those airplanes. But right now, just going on one of the assumptions. Every model has assumptions built into it, what you're going to do. This one, the assumption is that the refueling probe stays out the entire transit. So the refueling probes come out and in on tac air platforms. There's more drag when the refueling probe is out. So if you're flying, I know you're shaking your head, but it's, there's a bunch of things like that that we assumed in there. The airplane's got a lot of internal gas. It goes a long way. Why would you have to take that airplane to the tanker more than I would an F-18 that has a shorter radius than an F-35? So it doesn't make any sense. But you're better safe than sorry, so we do as we're told. But now I think we're in a very thoughtful way saying hey, some of these assumptions don't make sense. But you've got to redo the models on that. It's not a big deal, but it will make for more efficient, again, learning with the airplane. But it's actually, so this will be a lot better than we thought it was, fuel economy going on on a transatlantic --

DWG: So who is it that set those assumptions? Is it the Air Force tankers you're talking about?

Lt. Gen. Davis: I think it's the Air Force tankers probably deal with data from the Naval Aviation Systems Command. You know, from the main [inaudible]. So we're now redoing the data on that. So that's a little thing, but it has, it makes for a lot more efficient --

DWG: Yeah.

Lt. Gen. Davis: Much better --

DWG: I just want to be clear. Is it the Air Force tankers that you're talking about taking from?

Lt. Gen. Davis: Yes.

DWG: Okay, so not the Marine Corps tankers.

Lt. Gen. Davis: No. It's all Air Force [strat] tankers.

DWG: Okay. And then if I could just follow-up --

Lt. Gen. Davis: We haven't tried to move our airplanes across an ocean with a C-130 yet.

DWG: Okay.

DWG: Would you [like to]?

Lt. Gen. Davis: I never say never, right? I've moved airplanes across the United States on C-130s before, so I never say never, right? But I wouldn't even want to go into a scenario where we might do that. But we tank them extensively off of C-130s for our [inaudible], for all of our [inaudible]. Those airplanes we are tanking all the time off of C-130s, and the Air Force tankers. And they'll probably tank a lot off joint tankers as well, over there in the Pacific. Coalition tankers. But this is just for the strat, moving point A to point B, moving a unit across an ocean or a long way. Our model was off. It's off in an overly conservative manner, so let's get that right.

DWG: So how many times would you tank now versus --

Lt. Gen. Davis: Too many.

DWG: -- how many you should?

Lt. Gen. Davis: More than we should.

DWG: But how much more than we should?

Lt. Gen. Davis: I don't, maybe double. It may be double. I don't know. That's a wag, all right? But it's, we're tanking a lot more than we should. We can be a lot more efficient than we are.

DWG: Thank you. And if I could just follow up on the Super Hornet versus F-35C/B thing. What do you, so in a world where you don't have F-35C's, you have Super Hornets instead, what would that mean to Marine Corps aviation in your view?

Lt. Gen. Davis: There are, there are some scenarios you won't be able to go. You'll have higher attrition of your legacy, 4th generation airplanes than you would if you don't have the 5th gen airplanes. That's very clear.

DWG: And --

Lt. Gen. Davis: We're not going backwards in time, we're going forward in time. Again, the United States Navy, United States Marine Corps, forward deployed, naval and expeditionary. We want to make sure that our Marines and our Sailors have the very best gear in case something bad happens, right? And that's 5th generation airplanes. We're very clear on that. It's what's the right mix of those airplanes that we're --

DWG: So in your view can the Navy afford to just go with the C's if the Marines have, or go with the Super Hornets if the Marines have the B's and the Air Force has the A's? I mean can the Navy afford to just stick with the Super Hornets?

Lt. Gen. Davis: I'd let the study kind of -- I think they're -- let's let the study be fair and come up with its answer, all right? I think it's, to me it's fairly straightforward, but let's let the study be the study. I don't want to prejudge the study because that's not fair.

DWG: Sidney Friedberg, Breaking Defense.

Now for something completely different. You mentioned the Intrepid II pods, the [sundowning of powers], and of course this also is tied into F-35 because that's the other two parts of the electronic warfare solution going forward. So where do you stand in moving away from the sort of old model of, you have a bunch of Prowlers that do EW for everyone, to sort of this distributed model where we have pods on everything but kites, basically. And F-35s are at the cutting edge [inaudible] from the Prowlers.

Lt. Gen. Davis: I think it's really exciting. Let's not forget UAVs. Right? So the UAVs we've developed, the ones we have right now I think 221 is getting an Intrepid Tiger payload. We'll put Intrepid Tiger, it's already on the Harrier, it goes on the F-18, goes on the UH-1Y right now. It will go on the C-130 and the V-22 next, and then the H-1Z. Right now it's a, [inaudible] its capabilities, but it's a very good electronic warfare system and with Intrepid Tiger Block 2X, it will be an even better electronic warfare system.

It is open architecture. It is developed by the government so we can modify it. We're not [inaudible] to any OEM for devolving this thing, we're devolving it ourselves. The air crew can manipulate the payload and also the customer on the ground can manipulate the payload as well. So for [stand in] jamming it's quite good. The F-35 is a stand in jammer. I would say it's only going to get better over time in doing that job. And I think, you don't want anybody being a disadvantaged user in terms of electronic warfare. So this is a way for us you know, let's face it. The Marine Corps had 24 Prowlers. We had a fleet of 1,065 airplanes. That's not a lot. So a lot of people went without electronic warfare capabilities. But under this strategy, having every airplane. If you look, they were flying these payloads off of Libya from the MEU, an attack on our UH-1Y and our Harriers. Right? So the customers need their capability, and we want to give the customers the capability. Our MEUs have never been covered by electronic warfare before. They are now. That's a good deal, right? So everywhere they go they put their capabilities out there.

I think with this [MUCS], this Group 5 UAS, it's got enough of a payload that I think that airplane will have a very significant electronic warfare capability in the out years. We've got to build the airplane first and then work on the payload side.

Everything that flies, to include the new radios we're developing, will help us with electronic warfare capability. It's different, but it's also pretty exciting.

You talk about hardware. The other part of that is the human ware that goes along with the software, right? We have to make sure that we have some very very capable electronic warfare officers in our Prowler community right now. He is retaining them

and keeping them so that we keep that intellectual capital alive and well for this distributed capability. That can give us more robust capability, more distributed capability. Who's going to do the reprogramming on those airplanes, to make the suggestions for reprogramming? That's needed. Somebody with the skills that an electronic warfare officer brings to the fight on Prowler. And our cyber community as well.

DWG: And then as the F-35s, sort of the highest [inaudible] platform, how urgently do you need that from this EWR projection?

Lt. Gen. Davis: It's totally, it's an absolute requirement to go fight in the high end fight. The F-35 is out there with that capability. I won't say much more than that, but we're excited about what's coming. We're excited about what we have and we're excited about what's coming.

DWG: Sir, just a quick factoid. When does the last, on your current time line, when do you pull the last operational Harrier squadrons out of service to --

Lt. Gen. Davis: Well, I was told when I was down there at NAVAIR for the program manager change of command, it's always a trick question. I say when is your last, when do you stop flying Harriers? And he would always say 2026. And I'd say when I tell you to stop flying them, right? [Laughter]. The airplane's got a lot of life. We ought to be, if you take good care of them, whether it's an F-18 or a Harrier or an Osprey, you fly it through their service life. But it's not ready for a split trench at the end of that time, right? So providing operational capability. We'll still have operational capability [inaudible] like what we're doing with CH-53 Echo. Same way. I want my range flying, very highly capable combat airplanes to the very last day, so right now the plan is 2026.

DWG: To pull the last squadron.

Lt. Gen. Davis: The last squadron.

DWG: And the other question is --

Lt. Gen. Davis: The F-18 right now is 2030. Unless I get more airplanes faster. Where I think I'm at risk is with F-18 and I would like to get out of F-18 faster.

DWG: Next week there are going to be a couple of major readiness hearings on the Hill and everybody is focusing, as you have today, on spare parts and the need for spare parts. I think that's almost a DoD-wide theme. Certainly a DoN wide theme.

Lt. Gen. Davis: It is. Paul Grossbeck's done a great job. The admiral that runs Pax River, a sharp guy, good friend of mine. He's done some really great work to go after that. My [inaudible] Sailors, he's worked that as well.

DWG: So we're on a major extended CR right now, Continuing Resolution. There's talk about a year-long resolution on the Hill. There's even whispers now about a

possible two-year CR. So from an acquisition point of view, because we are discussing parts and readiness. From an acquisition point of view where are your real acute problems right now in this current CR? What happens if we go all year long?

Lt. Gen. Davis: I think it will put the military at great risk if we don't get spare parts.

DWG: But beyond the spare parts, --

Lt. Gen. Davis: Well, [inaudible] funding. So in the readiness recovery model our cost per flight hour goes up a little bit, so we're making it. So we're about funded about 10 percent of what we need to fly our flight hours. We're 8 percent shy of what we need to fly our flight hours. We're flying to our plan right now. So I would say we're running hot in our budget for our flight hour goal. So if I don't get more money, I'll stop flying in July or August.

So we are actually flying them more hours, but we dropped off a little bit because some of the guys were flying to budget vice to plan, so we burned about 10 percent cold in one of my air wings. Now everybody's flying to plan right now. We won't make those hours back in the first quarter, but we're flying to our glide slope when we fly to our plan. We're burning a little high on our budgets in the flight hour money which goes into spare parts and all that other kind of stuff, is a little bit shy. So we're betting on the [inaudible] that if we fly those hours we'll be able to find somebody that's under-executing and get the money from them to basically keep our flight hours going.

DWG: When you say stop flying in July or August. What stops flying? Everything? Or is it select units? How does that work?

Lt. Gen. Davis: I'll get there. That's not something -- it will be the MEF commanders, the MARFORs and the Commandant deciding if we have to do that. I'm highly confident no one will ask the Marine Corps to stop flying. So --

DWG: Whether they want the Marine Corps or not to stop flying, you might not have the money, so what happens?

Lt. Gen. Davis: We'll figure it out when we get there, sir. If we have to be, like we've done before, we had to do it, we proposed that the operational [inaudible]. But that's exactly where your readiness problem, your lack of proficiency comes from. When the bench stops flying. So I'm going to assume that the country's got more sense than that. I am. [Laughter]. I am. And guess what? Last year, we did. We got exactly that. We got the money at the end to go keep flying. All right? No one wants the Marine Corps to not be ready. All right? Great question. Better answer.

DWG: Sir, you talked about the right density for maintainers.

Lt. Gen. Davis: Yeah.

DWG: In your maintainers, our maintainers are actually already really, really [inaudible].

Lt. Gen. Davis: They are.

DWG: They are sometimes doing and three jobs. And you also said in a later thing that you didn't anticipate putting more people into the squadron.

Lt. Gen. Davis: Right.

DWG: So you're just going to add more jobs for some of these guys?

Lt. Gen. Davis: No. What I'm going to do is I'm going to, I think we've got the right numbers of people in there, but all the studies have said that we could be more efficient than we are. So it's not just the maintainer, but it's you lay in the parts.

DWG: How about the armament guides and the [inaudible] commanders and all those? They're busy, sir.

Lt. Gen. Davis: They are. And I'll tell you, I think we can be better than we are right now, and it comes down to if my tech pubs aren't up to date that they use? That's wasted effort out there. So how do I make these [hel] [inaudible] Marines as good as they can be? I'll tell you, I've been at this for 36-1/2 years. We have the very best enlisted Marines I've ever seen in my life. They are phenomenal young men and women. They are great. If you give them the tools, you give them the training, they'll water your eyes. But right now my sense is I haven't given them all tools they need, spare parts. I haven't given them the right training. You know, stratified training. So right now our A and C schools are very very good. I would say we do more on-the-job training for our follow-on qualifications. We can do better there. So I want my corporals and my sergeants and my staff sergeants out on the flight line teaching all these corporals how to maintain these airplanes. Right? As mentor teachers. Now we're laying in the codified, standardized training across all air wings to go do that.

I think we have the right numbers. We have to up our density of our qualifications that that Marine has. So instead of two CDIs you might have three or four. Those young Marines want that. They want that. And now we basically just need to go train them. Train them and retain them. So if they're that much harder to train, the Marine Corps knows the value proposition of the enlisted maintainers. It's not just spare parts. It's not just new airplanes. It's the enlisted Marine that does the maintenance. We know that. We'll actually put, I believe we're going to put a higher value on keeping those. They work really hard to keep aviators in the cockpit. I think you're going to find they're going to work really hard to keep maintainers maintaining. The really good ones.

DWG: So [inaudible] is probably going to go up to an extent?

Lt. Gen. Davis: We'll see. We're looking at all options.

DWG: One more question on the MV-22, the hard landing in Yemen. Can you elaborate on that at all? And maybe just generally why are these MV-22's, it seems like there's a propensity for them to have a hard landing. Is it the Osprey itself? Or is it, as you mentioned earlier, with aircraft right now, it's human error?

Lt. Gen. Davis: I would say the Osprey doesn't have a propensity for hard landings. We've had brown out landings, but if you look at the brown out airplanes I've lost, the United States Army, the United States Marine Corps, H-60s, H-47s, H-53s. We've killed a lot of people in brown out landings. So I don't know what happened on this and I don't think it's fair to CENTCOM. Central Command's got the [job] for what happened in this particular mission. The good news, a lot of hard landings people don't walk away from. Everybody walked away from this one, right? One Marine bumped his head. But everybody walked away. So there's bad, but also good.

We don't know what happened to that. It could have, there's lots of reasons for hard landings. I think we ought to let the investigation play out what happened there. They were going into a firefight. It was at night. Here's the good news, everybody came home from that one. But I will say, my thoughts and prayers go to the SEAL we lost. That's heartbreaking. And we'll find out what happened to the V-22. It's the safest assault support airplane we've ever put in the field. IF you look at Air Force Special Operations Command the Marine Corps, when we banged one up, shot one up, for the most part people are -- that fuselage stayed intact. We ended up destroying that airplane --

DWG: So the fuselage was intact. What part then was damaged?

Lt. Gen. Davis: I'm going to wait. I asked questions this morning. I didn't get any answers. But it was, I saw pictures of the airplane. It looked completely --

DWG: Was it just necessary from a, to destroy the plane, was it necessary to --

Lt. Gen. Davis: I think we just need to kind of, what's really good is our Marines are back. We lost a Sailor. We'll find out what happened.

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